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Billy Graham will present the ultimate 'peace plan' to a fragile world this Christmas



A Christmas picture of Billy and Ruth Bell Graham.

Dan Wooding

Billy Graham will go on television this Christmas season to present to our fragile world the ultimate "peace plan" that he believes can change the face (and hearts) of humankind.

Graham's powerful "peace message" will be presented in the world television Christmas special called "A Season For Peace," which will be aired in North America on Dec. 3 and around the world in more than 150 countries and territories in 33 languages throughout the month of December. Negotiations are being finalized for the possibility of an extended broadcast on two international satellite systems whose "footprints" cover two-thirds of the world's population, including many countries traditionally closed to the Gospel.

"People everywhere are searching for peace," says Graham in the program. "Even though we celebrate the birth of the 'Prince of Peace' at

Christmas, peace itself seems elusive. There are border disputes, ethnic war, religious battles, and perhaps most persuasively, people are battered by conflicts within. All over our world people are beginning to realize that in their quest for peace what they are really searching for is God, and he is not restricted to churches or synagogues."

Something is missing

Graham goes on to say, "They thought this was going to be the Christian century. But the 20th century has been the bloodiest century in the history of humankind. And what is the 21st century going to be? Think of all these new weapons and all of these new ways to kill and maim and hurt that we have developed. President Yeltsin stated that the whole world could be standing unknowingly at the edge of the abyss, and we might be.

"We thought as we stood on

the edge of the beginning of a new year and a new century, that all of our problems would be solved, but they haven't been," the evangelist continues. "There's something missing in everybody's life. You walk down the streets of Moscow or Berlin or Johannesburg or New York or Los Angeles and you see it among the people that they seem to be searching. Some of the most successful people in the world will admit they haven't found in life what they were searching for."

Graham goes on to explain that peace can only be found through a relationship with Jesus Christ. He added that the obstacles individuals face in finding peace are often found within themselves. And he should know, for he has been a tireless "peace maker" in the world for more than half a century.

"A 'Season For Peace' is not a traditional 'Christmas' program," says Bob Williams, director of International Min-

istries for Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). "Instead, it contains a message by Billy Graham about peace with God, peace among people and the birth of the Prince of Peace, amplified with music and video in a powerful, dramatic way. This program speaks to

people — regardless of their language and culture."

In countries where people are less likely to be familiar with the Christmas story, this effective TV program begins with a dramatic contemporary theatrical interpretation of the simple

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Liberals have one more chance to safeguard a caring society, says CPJ

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — Prime Minister Jean Chretien may be boasting that his Liberal government has kept 90 per cent of the promises made in the "Red Book," but that does not impress Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ). It thinks that several Red Book promises too important to ignore have not been kept.

CPJ's executive director Harry Kits points to the persistence of child poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation as a failure on the part of the Chretien government to address social and environmental deficits, something they promised they would do in the Red Book, he says.

In a submission presented

during pre-budget hearings to the House of Commons standing committee on finance on November 8, CPJ proposed a series of budget measures that would address these deficits.

The submission entitled "Safeguarding a Caring Society" recommends an integrated child tax benefit as a building block towards the elimination of child poverty. Such a proposal would cost the federal government \$2 billion, CPJ estimates.

But it does not want the government to take that money from existing programs that support families with children. Instead CPJ recommends that the government lower the tax-deductibility ceilings for both

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News

Tutu, Mandela, Carter join Graham for broadcast

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Christmas story. This four minute segment has a global "feel" in style, and uses only Scripture as narration. The powerful song "A Night To Remember" concludes the first section of the program.

Tutu, Mandela, Carter appear

In "A Season For Peace" Nobel Peace Prize recipients Archbishop Desmond Tutu and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa provide their perspectives on the unceasing quest for peace in our world. President Mandela says, "We have all made mistakes in the past, and this is not longer a time for finger pointing. Let us forget the past, let us join hands and work together.... That is the essence of the message of reconciliation.... We should let peace reside in all our hearts."

Also featured in the fast-moving TV special is former

U.S. President Jimmy Carter, another untiring emissary for peace, who has contributed a commentary on the need to "look within" to find the problems that create tension and distrust. "We have more wars going on now than ever before in history," Carter says. "Now every war in the world is a war within a country. There are not any more wars between two nations."

Carter, who has devoted his energy to promoting reconciliation in the midst of pain and suffering, further explained in the program where he turns for hope and encouragement.

"I'm a Christian and I worship the Prince of Peace," he said. "I don't think there's any doubt about it, that anyone who has faith in Christ would have as part of our elementary human commitment the promotion of peace, the protection of peace, the end of strife and hatred, of alienation among people. So I



Archbishop Desmond Tutu

think that inherently, Christianity can be equated in its broadest definition with the word 'peace.'"

The remainder of the program is centred around a challenging message by Billy Graham taken from John 3:16. Viewers in countries around the world,

having heard from several world renowned leaders, will then meet on the TV screen a variety of individuals who have found peace in their lives through a genuine encounter with Jesus Christ.

"These are 'real' people who despite not being sports heroes or being well-known for what they do, they will attract people to *who they are* and, more importantly, *what they have found*," says Bob Williams, from the Billy Graham headquarters in Minneapolis. "They are individuals who have begun to experience peace, in spite of the restless circumstances of their lives."

The stories are drawn from many places like Paris; Bangkok; Medellin, Colombia and Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic areas of the world that are staggering under constant torment of unrest or pressures of urban life and yet where people have found the

power of Jesus Christ to overcome their world. These real-life "people" stories are told in small segments, augmenting points in Graham's powerful message. They are illustrated with dramatic recreations of powerful or turbulent moments in their lives.

"With stories blended together with music during the course of the one-hour program, Graham's message is the core," says Bob Williams. "Illustrated with supporting scenes from around the world, he concludes with a powerful invitation to accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior."

Billy Graham says clearly in his sermon, "At this time of year, there is no better moment for you to find peace — peace with God." Graham concludes by summarizing what he believes to be the reason for the season.

Operation Matthew

A unique feature of this Christmas TV special will be "Operation Matthew" whereby Christians will again be encouraged to invite friends into their homes to view the program with them and then discuss its message. According to Bob Williams, "The average Christian in North America fails to realize the evangelistic impact of a prime-time telecast around the world, as very few countries have the proliferation of cable and channel selections found in North America."

The World Television Series last April confirmed the viability of the house party concept as one million participating churches had an average of per 20 congregation. National church leaders have expressed renewed commitment to foster even greater participation with probably 30 to 40 house parties per church for the World Television Christmas Special.

"In many countries a Christmas party is considered by the Church to be a frivolous gathering," says Williams. "The 'A Season For Peace' broadcast provides Christians around the world an opportunity for fellowship and evangelism, to explain to friends and neighbors what Christmas is all about."

Dan Wooding is a British journalist now based in Southern California where he is also the founder and international director of ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times).

CPJ recommends 'green taxes'

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the Registered Retirement Savings Plan and the Registered Pension Plan.

Scaling back the \$10 billion federal portion of the RRSP and RPP deductions would serve both the older and the younger generations, CPJ believes, since lower ceilings would still allow for sufficient retirement income and would free up money for poverty-stricken children.

In addition CPJ recommends that the federal government remove the tax-free stature of lottery and gambling winnings, which costs the government \$910 million annually.

Poverty hinders

CPJ also wants the government to adopt the following principles for social programs:



Jean Chretien

"All Canadians have the right to a basic income when in need. This right extends to all who are in need, regardless of the specific cause of that need and regardless of where the person

lives in Canada. Attached to this right is the responsibility to be willing to accept suitable employment or training where age, health and family responsibilities permit."

Poverty hinders the capacity of people to fulfil their human calling and to contribute to the community, says CPJ.

CPJ rebukes the government for using the employment insurance fund surplus to cover part of its deficit while at the same time restricting eligibility for employment insurance to the point where less than half of unemployed Canadians now qualify for benefits.

To better preserve the environment, CPJ recommends the taxing of such destructive activities as pollution and resource depletion through so-called green taxes.

In defence of immigrants and refugees, CPJ asks that the \$975 right-of-landing fee introduced in 1995 be dropped. This fee comes on top of a \$500 processing fee introduced by the Liberals in 1994. No other country in the world charges such fees.

The main theme in CPJ's proposals is "inter-generational equity: "We may not satisfy our own needs by impoverishing fu-

ture generations."

In that light, CPJ applauds the federal government's attempts to bring Canada's debt and deficit under control. But just as this generation should not saddle the next generation with fiscal debts, it should not pass on environmental and social deficits either, says CPJ.

Children have first claim

"Children are dependent on the nurture and care of adults for their well-being. Given this vulnerability, and the serious consequences of child poverty, children ought to have first claim on public resources."

"These proposals will cause little or no increase in the fiscal deficit," says St. Catharines CPJ researcher Stephanie Baker Collins. "How the Liberals choose to respond will say a great deal about their commitment to equity."

Baker Collins says that the uniqueness of CPJ's presentation lies in the fact that it offers a unified framework of principles and CPJ is one of the few presenters who speak on behalf of others. Most groups, like the restaurateurs and pension managers who spoke before CPJ, have narrow interests and represent themselves.

Attention: Subscribers

The mailing of last week's issue of Christian Courier (Nov. 22, 1996) was delayed because we were forced to comply with new Canada Post packaging regulations. The entire shipment was returned to St. Catharines for adjustments. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused you.

Stan de Jong
Manager

Opinion

Jesus never imposed God's law of love

Gerald Vandezande

Gerald Vandezande, national public affairs director of Citizens for Public Justice, recently addressed the National Conference of the Christian Legal Fellowship held in London, Ont., on "Reconciliation in a Divided World." His definition of reconciliation was: "To end a relation of enmity and hostility, and to substitute for it one of love and justice, equality and mutuality, compassion and mercy, faithfulness and community."

One means of achieving reconciliation between feuding groups is to accept a form of pluralism that serves as an alternative to "liberal" or "modern" pluralism, said Vandezande. In the following excerpt he points to Jesus' reconciling way.

- These profound differences among us lead, at times, to significant disagreements about what we should be saying and doing; for example, with respect to the following current issues:
- 1) the Aboriginal peoples' inherent right to self-government within Confederation;
 - 2) Quebec's democratic right to self-determination and possible separation from Canada;
 - 3) the faith communities' right and responsibility to practise their visions of life in education and social services;
 - 4) the human right to life, protection and support at all stages of development, both before and after birth;
 - 5) the elimination of the discrimination suffered by women, children and people of color;
 - 6) the human needs and socio-economic rights of poor, unemployed and homeless neighbors;
 - 7) the legal equality rights and freedoms of gays and lesbians;
 - 8) and last but not least, the environmental rights of God's good creation and our God-given duty to respect its fragility.

Jesus' way

As I read the Scriptures, it strikes me that Jesus did not impose God's liberating law of love on his disciples, on the Pharisees or on the crowds on whom Jesus had compassion. Instead, Jesus invited all people to follow the Way, to live by the Spirit, to keep in step with the Spirit.

Jesus nowhere tried to coerce his followers. Jesus always sought to convince them by reminding all who would listen of God's abiding promises and forgiving grace. Jesus' practice of compassion, love and mercy, as well as his call to repentance, faithfulness and justice are not impositions, but invitations. They are not coercive but persuasive.

Jesus did not rely on the weapons of military might and political power like the Roman emperor did. Nor did Jesus dictatorial-ly force people to believe and act. Jesus was not in the business of oppression and exploitation. Instead, he constantly engaged in the ministry of liberation and redemption by proclaiming the message of reconciliation and restoration.

Jesus' life-embracing proclamation clearly teaches us to resist resolutely the spiritualization of the gospel and the consequent secularization of life. Jesus' all-inclusive message and ministry remind us also to avoid the imposition of Christianity or any other religion or ideology.

Equal dignity

This means that in our culture we must consistently oppose arbitrary measures and the abuse of Canadian law and public policy to ensure the secularization of public life. At the same time, Christians should not resort to the courts and legislatures to ensure the Christianization of Canadian culture and societal institutions, such as schools, child care centres and homes for the elderly and handicapped. Christians have no more right to impose their faith than secularists have to impose their ideology.

There must be justice for all persons and communities, without discrimination based on creed, faith, ideology or religion. Since God has created each of us equal in dignity, there must be public room and societal space for all people.

Gerald Vandezande lives in Agincourt, Ont.

Life in the laundromat

John Vanasselt

Give me your schools and I'll take your nation — Napoleon Bonaparte.

I had my first encounter with a laundromat as a student at Calvin College. I remember how the items tumbled behind the window of the dryer — you knew they were clothes and linens, but it was almost impossible to identify what was what as the drum turned.

Watching and reading the news recently reminds me a little of that experience. It's not surprising that some of us feel as if we're living in a laundromat. Restructuring, downsizing, technology, health care reform, education reform, days of protest — everywhere we look things seem to be tumbling, sometimes beyond recognition.

Struggle for control

There is a struggle of epic proportions taking place for control of the future of public education in Ontario. The main players are those who have made the system what it is and those who want to reform or revolutionize it.

On the one hand, there are the teachers' federations, school boards and employees, and Ministry of Education bureaucrats under whose direction schools have developed into the main provider of socialization services.

Attempting to focus education on preparation for the global economy are numerous members of the present government, including the Minister of Education. They are supported by various parent organizations who wish to heighten academic quality. The structural issue — school boards or not — is simply the means by which one side or the other establishes control.

A further complication is the status of Roman Catholic schools, operating under constitutional authority but still receiving less government financial support than the public system. Even some Catholic supporters of independent Christian schools seek equality for their own schools ahead of justice for independent schools. Internally, there is also tension between two elements having different ideas of just how "conservative" Catholic schools ought to be.

As a result of jealous guardianship of the Catholic schools, the Catholic community be-

comes a bedfellow with the vested interests from the public system. They need to retain their school boards to keep close control over the Catholic system.

What do we do?

What is the place of the Christian school movement in our time? Are we inside the drum, tumbling along with everything else, or are we outside watching with both feet on the ground?

Supporters of Christian schools know all about the necessity of autonomous governance. We also have a vision of how the world should be, and we want to teach our young people how to make it that way.

How do we Christian school supporters proceed? Do we even dare follow through with our efforts to gain official recognition and financial support from government? Will we be drawn inextricably into the flurry of change and uncertainty?

The answer is that we must continue. C.S. Lewis stated that it was important for Christians to do philosophy just because there was non-Christian philosophy. Christians have the obligation to participate in all levels of culture, including education. Jesus himself deferred to his disciples when asked to defend himself before the Sanhedrin. "Why question me?" he said, "Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said."

The matter of government recognition is not simply a

matter of democratic justice, it is a matter of fulfilling the requirements of being called *Christian*. We are expected to defend His honor before men, not because He needs us to, but because He wants us to.

We must continue because if we Christians don't stand up for their rights as citizens, our freedom to worship and live according to their beliefs may be repressed to the point of private activity. There is truth to the adage that, "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance."


Efforts must continue

We must continue because true justice in a democracy demands equal and fair treatment, without undue burden or penalty. For the sake of making it easier for parents to send their children to Christian schools, our efforts cannot cease.

The very actions we take towards our goal are a witness to the reality of our faith translated into deeds. Our goals are framed in the promise that we can never compromise control of Christian schools, we can never compromise on hiring Christian teachers, we can never compromise on using Christian curriculum and we can never compromise on admission criteria.

It's the losing of those basics that will land us in the dryer.

John Vanasselt is director of communications for the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.



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Editorial

The church in less-than-honorable captivity

Imagine about 50 women being visited in an Albion, New York, prison by a group of about 30 "outside" Christian women. This is a Kairos weekend held in November 1994. During the weekend the gospel is preached in word and deed, and many women prisoners accept Jesus as the rescuer of their formerly dead-end lives.

During and at the end of the weekend, the newborn women prisoners are asked: "Who is the church?" And the answer roars back: "We are the church!" This is repeated twice until the truth of that confession is burned into their hearts. The church is now in prison. It's not only out there where the steeples shimmer and the organs roar. It's inside barbed-wire walls, albeit in a somewhat embryonic and fragile state.

What this question and answer exercise does is empower the women to lay claim to the promises of God. They don't need an

intermediate other than Jesus to come to God. And Jesus is in prison with them, not anymore contained in the persons of the visitors, but in each other's persons. Whenever two or three of these women are gathered in Christ's name, he is in their midst.

This is a strange thing, when you think about it. The church is not a building, nor does it need elders and pastors to be legitimate. The church is not contained in "forms of unity" and a church order, nor does it depend on ordination and sacraments. The church is the people who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

When Peter made his profound confession that Jesus is the Christ, Jesus replied that he would

ourselves are responsible for what the church is.

Now that's a good point to make, except it turns out that in the unedited video this same person had carefully explained that this statement had been made by *prisoners*, not by their visitors. Too bad the video editors removed that explanation, because in its unedited state it makes an even more profound point.

Thank you forever

Perhaps the editing was done inadvertently. Or perhaps not. Perhaps we are uncomfortable saying that the church can be something other than what we experience on Sundays. May the claim about being the church not be made by an

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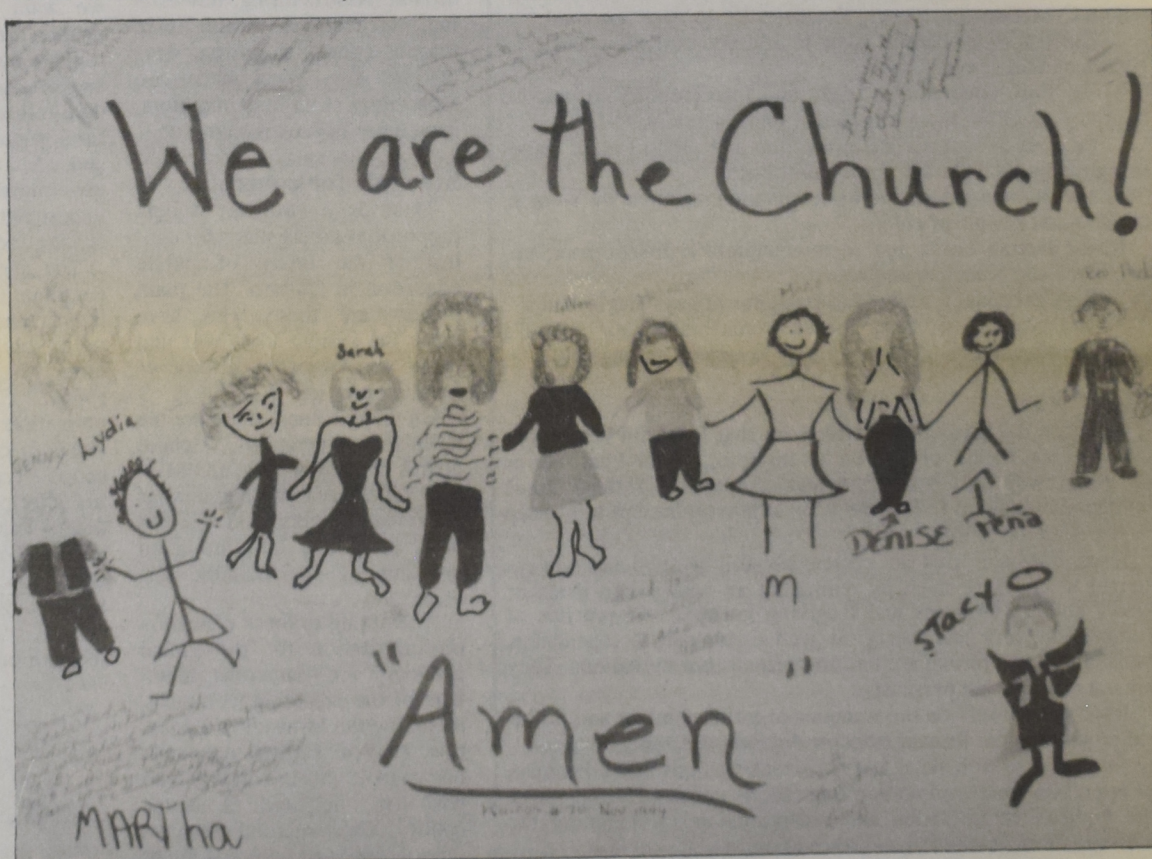
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build his church on that confession. And so if the confession is made behind bars, the church is built there, too.

An unfortunate cut

I make this rather elaborate point because of what I saw on video at the Christian Reformed Church Free to Serve rally in Ancaster, Ont., a few weeks ago (see editorial of Nov. 15). I distinctly remember (and I wrote about it), that one videoed person asked: "Who is the church?" His answer was, "We are the church." The way the video presented it was as if that person were saying this about the people who were visiting prisoners on Kairos weekends. That's how I understood it. It was as if he were saying: all of us can serve God by visiting prisoners because we are the church. Rather than focus on how we can criticize "the church" we

"unorganized" group of women behind bars? What of their confession? And what about the promise made by Jesus that he would build his church on that confession?

To illustrate the point that the church exists also behind bars, we reprint a drawing that a group of these prisoners made during a Kairos weekend. It shows them holding hands with big smiles on their faces underneath the bold proclamation that they are the church. One of them, Maria Cuba, wrote, "Thank you forever." I would say that has the ring of being a church because it has eternity written all over it and because the church's one foundation is the forever Lord of life: Jesus Christ.

And just so that there is no doubt in anyone's mind that what these women said is true, they added to their profession a strong "Amen." And all God's other church people said **BW**

News

Little media attention focused on Bukavu, Zaire

MCC workers fear 'silent tragedy' there

AKRON, Pa. (MCC) — Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers fear a "silent tragedy" may be taking place in Bukavu, eastern Zaire. Recent media reports have shown hundreds of thousands of Rwandan refugees returning to Rwanda from camps around Goma, Zaire. But the outside world still has little knowledge of the situation in Bukavu, including in four camps MCC helped support.

Terry Sawatsky, MCC Africa co-director, has travelled to Africa to assess the situation. Last week Sawatsky and Krista Rigalo, an MCCer who had been working in Bukavu, flew from Kenya to Rwanda. They are attempting to travel overland to the Rwanda/Zaire border, and then to cross into Bukavu.

MCC has been unable to contact its partners there since workers were evacuated from Bukavu on Oct. 27. MCC workers are concerned that the fighting between the Zairian army and Zairian rebels (Zairian Tutsis known as Banyamulenge) may have cut off food supplies, destroyed refugee camps and Zairians' homes, and uprooted many people around Bukavu.

Special prayers on Dec. 1

MCC is also assisting Rwandan refugees who have returned home. From its "Central African Healing Fund" MCC has contributed \$13,400 Cdn/\$10,000 US to Protestant churches in Rwanda that are helping 1,200 Rwandan families who are returning to Zaire. The Rwandan churches are supplying food, clothing, blankets, soap, hoes, seeds and other items to help the families re-establish themselves after being out of the country for

more than two years. As well, some of the lentils and oil MCC is supplying to the area via the Canadian Foodgrains Bank may go to Rwandans who have returned home.

MCC, Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services are asking churches to set aside time on Dec. 1 to pray for the people in eastern Zaire, as well as for people throughout Zaire. There are fears that the fighting that has racked eastern Zaire may spread to other parts of Zaire, a country that is home to some 170,000 Mennonites and tens of thousands of Christians of other denominations.

MCC continues to request blankets; the agency's goal is to collect 50,000 good-quality, double-bed-sized blankets to send to Bukavu. Persons can deliver blankets to any MCC office in Canada or the U.S. by Christmas Day, along with \$4

Cdn/\$3 US per blanket to pay for shipping costs. Churches in Bukavu will give these blankets to needy people, including to Zairians whose homes were looted by soldiers.

Money from MCC's ongoing

Central Africa Healing Fund will go to ship warm clothing, which MCC has in stock; for future relief work yet to be determined; and for continuing peace and development work in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire.

Canada announces 1997 immigration levels

OTTAWA (Canadian Scene) — Reiterating that immigration is necessary for Canada's growth, Citizenship and Immigration Minister Lucienne Robillard recently tabled the 1997 immigration plan in the House of Commons.

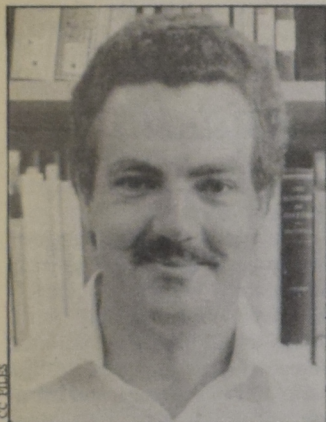
The 1997 plan sets the overall range of immigrants and refugees at between 195,000 and 200,000. Of that number, between 168,000 and 178,000 immigrants and 26,100 to 32,300 refugees will be allowed. These levels are "consistent with the strategic framework for immigration set by the government in 1994," asserts Robillard.

Within the immigrant category, 102,000 to 113,000 are in

the "economic class," including their dependants. Levels for "family class" immigrants will be between 58,400 and 66,200. Other categories — such as live-in caretakers, persons in special circumstances, provincial and territorial nominees and persons admitted for humanitarian and compassionate reasons — will comprise just 8,500 people.

Among those considered refugees, there will be allowed 7,300 government-assisted persons, 2,800 to 4,000 privately sponsored persons, and 16,000 to 21,000 refugees landed in Canada with dependants abroad.

A graduate and an undergraduate school look at forming a Christian university in Edmonton



Harry Fernhout

Bert Witvoet

EDMONTON/TORONTO — The Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) and The King's University College have begun to explore the possibility of affiliation "with the goal of creating a small Christian university."

Such an affiliation would see the ICS move to Edmonton, which would allow the two institutions to share facilities and resources while, at least in the short term, maintaining their separate identities.

The ICS initiated the discussions. ICS president Harry

Fernhout believes that the upcoming dialogue has exciting possibilities.

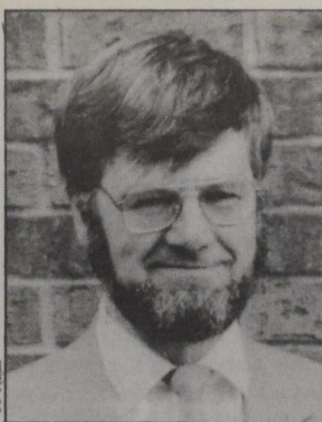
"I'm especially encouraged by the fact that our initiative is motivated by a desire to advance our shared mission in higher Christian education, and not by a sense of crisis," he says.

Discussions at the ICS started in the fall of 1995 and spring of 1996. It was felt that such a link, creating the beginnings of a Christian university in the Reformed tradition, would represent an important step in realizing the vision which motivated the founders of the Institute in the 1950s, says a news release.

Only a discussion

However, Fernhout stresses the tentative nature of the discussions. "At this point ICS and The King's have committed themselves to a conversation about a possibility, and nothing more."

The King's University College president Henk Van Andel agrees with that assessment. "Our board of governors discussed at length what our response should be to the ICS's overture for affiliation. It con-



Henk Van Andel

cluded that we should explore this possibility further."

The consensus at The King's board meeting in early November was that "while there are many questions to be answered, the possibility of affiliation with an existing Christian graduate institute has great potential for furthering the College's mission of providing Christian university education," says Van Andel.

Representatives of the two institutions will hold further meetings in the coming months and will report to their respective boards in the spring of 1997.

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Education

Pedagogeries



Alyce Oosterhuis

Are you alone at your desk?

Those who compare international academic achievement tend to place Japanese students at the top of their scales. Many North American parents have used these comparators to lament the state of the nations's schools and have demanded changes that will enable their children to be internationally competitive with the best.

Yet Japanese students do not out-perform North American students because of their schools' superiority but because of their communal values. Japanese mothers invest many hours in supervising their children's homework; Japanese families are intimately concerned with their offspring's achievement; the individual's performance is a reflection of communal worth and competence.

Resolutions die away

First-term report cards have been issued in Edmonton, and I assume that throughout the city many conscientious parents are sitting down once again to supervise their children's homework. These parents have resolved to prod the procrastinator, assist the struggler, encourage the faithful.

Speaking from experience, such parental resolutions tend to last for about a month and then other commitments disrupt the evening routines. We then convince ourselves that our children have to accept individual responsibility; they will not always have us around to prod, encourage or cajole.

Reflecting on homework practices I am struck by the differences in my children's and my own experiences. As a first-generation immigrant child whose English-language fluency and school learning outstripped her parents' language and academic training, I have no recollection of any parental homework assistance or supervision after eighth grade math.

My parents did not proofread essays or organize outlines. They did not know about my incomplete Latin assignments, my use of physics lab time to complete history assignments, my dexterity in writing while holding onto city bus stirrups. As long as I passed my courses and no teachers complained about my behavior, my parents remained blissfully ignorant of my daily work habits.

Beyond oneself

However, because I was very aware of being one of many immigrants there was a communal sense of "having to prove myself" that drove me to spend hours memorizing the history text and analyzing English prose for final exams. I nagged myself for being the youngest of three sisters, a Christian Reformed, Christian school graduate, a Dutch-Canadian. Like the Japanese students, my community sat at my desk with me; my family was being appraised because of my performance.

My own children do not have the burden of family self-esteem falling on their shoulders. Their performance is an indication of their competencies and not the school's reputation. They have loyalties to the family and school community, but their actions and performance reflect their own unique abilities, interests or choices. And as I supervise their homework I stress their individual gifts and responsibilities. I cannot be a Japanese mother whose identity is tied to the family, the clan, the community.

But are individual responsibilities necessarily so distinct from communal ones? What about the individual within the family or community? I will have to do some more homework.

Alyce Horzenberg Oosterhuis teaches education and psychology at The King's University College in Edmonton.

Three Canadians join Dordt faculty

Jim De Young

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa — A Canadian perspective continues to be an influential part of life and learning at Dordt. Of the six new faculty members added for the 1996-97 academic year, three are Canadian, bringing the total of Canadian faculty at Dordt to 14, or nearly 20 per cent of the faculty.

The three new professors are Peter Boonstra of the philosophy department, Syd Hielema of the theology department and Fred Van Geest of the political science department.

Leaving agriculture

Boonstra was born in Brandon, Man., and has lived on Vancouver Island, in Maple Ridge, B.C., and in Edmonton. He left his Canadian setting to attend Dordt, graduating in 1987 with a double major in agriculture and philosophy.

Moving to the Netherlands, he studied at the Free University in Amsterdam where he has been working on a doctoral degree in the history of philosophy and systematics. Boonstra received his *doctorandus* in systematic philosophy from the Free University in 1995. He is now working on completing his dissertation.

From music to theology

Syd Hielema grew up in Hamilton and St. Catharines, Ont. He graduated from Dordt with a degree in music in 1976. Returning home, Hielema studied at the University of Toronto where he obtained a bachelor of education in music and English. Hielema also holds a master's degree in theology from the University of St. Michael's College. He is currently working on a doctoral degree through Wycliffe College, Toronto School of Theology.

After teaching elementary and secondary music for 13 years in Ontario Christian high schools, Hielema turned to his interest in theology three years ago, beginning graduate studies while serving as half-time youth pastor at Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Newmarket, Ont.

To Dordt via Lebanon

Fred Van Geest comes to Dordt College from Beirut, Lebanon, but calls Ontario home. Van Geest's family moved to southern Ontario from Calgary, living in Drayton, Trenton and Grimsby, as his minister father's calls kept the family on the move. Van Geest also braved

the U.S./Canadian border to attend Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., for two years. He completed his BA at the University of Western Ontario, then went on to Carleton University where he earned a master's in public administration.

After working for the federal government for eight years in communications and the treasury, he attended Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. At Queen's, Van Geest obtained his PhD in political studies in 1995. Last year, Van Geest taught political science and public administration at the American University of Beirut.

Van Geest is the only one of the newcomers to contribute to the Canadian offerings in the Dordt curriculum. He will likely teach a course in Canadian government and politics, though Canadian Hubert Krygsman of the history department has taught the course since coming to Dordt in 1990. The other course with "Canadian" in its title is Canadian literature, taught by John Van Rys, yet another Ontario native.

According to registrar Doug Eckardt, these courses tend to attract predominantly Canadians, but always include a few

Americans as well. He sees them as important additions to the curriculum, both to meet the needs of Dordt's 150 Canadian students and to give other students a broader understanding of their discipline. Besides, he adds with a grin in his voice, "If I don't say that, my Canadian wife will kill me."

Maple leaf will keep flying

Van Rys of the English department lists Canadian authors Carol Shields, Michael Ondaatje, Robertson Davies and Alice Munro to make the point that Canadian literature is an increasingly important part of the canon of English literature.

"Canadian literature has come of age," he says. "Canadians are among the leading writers in the English language today." That fact, along with Dordt's mix of students, makes it very desirable to offer a course in Canadian literature, he believes.

Given the strength of the Canadian contingent at Dordt College, the Maple Leaf will continue to be a distinctive character of the Dordt College landscape, flying at the centre of campus beside the flags of the U.S. and the State of Iowa.

B.C. Christian schools publish science guidelines

Marian Van Til

LANGLEY, B.C. — At the beginning of the current school year the Society of Christian Schools in B.C. (SCSBC) published a paper on the teaching of science, reports the November issue of *The Link*, SCSBC's newsletter. The science paper has been sent to member schools for input and comment.

"Teaching Science in the Christian School" begins by showing unequivocally that the Bible is the basis for teaching science, *The Link* reports. "It clearly indicates that God created the world and that, because of sin, there is much brokenness which can be healed only because Christ has come to make all things new."

The paper presents "key concepts that need to structure the science programs in Christian schools," among which are: the universe is one of order and design; its systems are integrally woven together; patterns change in both regular and irregular

ways; creation exhibits a great diversity of systems.

The paper also suggests pedagogical principles to help educators teach science. Teachers must realize such things as the fact that "children come to science class with a variety of experiences and learning styles"; that their developmental levels, and their interests and backgrounds, must be considered in choosing topics for study; that a science class should combine experimentation and observation, and should develop a love of the subject in students; that learning is a collaborative effort; and that "activities in the science classroom should help students stand in awe of God."

"Teaching Science in the Christian School" will be the basis for science curriculum development undertaken by SCSBC this year. Copies are available from SCSBC member schools.

ARTS & MEDIA

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*



Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes play a modern *Romeo and Juliet*.

Marian Van Til

Rated PG. Stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Claire Danes, John Leguizamo, Harold Perrineau, Brian Dennehy, Paul Sorvino, Diane Vernora, Pete Postlethwaite. Adapted by Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce. Directed by Baz Luhrmann.

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* used to be introduced to students in early high school (my class read it in Grade 9); I hope it still is. With its witty banter, some of the Bard's most quoted lines, and a fairly straightforward plot about a pair of teenaged lovers — they defy their families' long-running animosity by falling in love and marrying, and their tragic end brings their families together — it is the most easily accessible of Shakespeare's tragedies. Maybe that's why this modern rock-video-like version aimed at a young audience works as well as it does. This is savvy Shakespeare for the MTV generation.

The Montagues and Capulets of Verona still feud. But the family heads are now wealthy Mafia-like dons whose sons and nephews have taken that feud to the streets of "Verona Beach" in a punk gang subculture (but *Westside Story* this isn't).

These macho young guys have all the necessary accoutrements of gang members: the right haircuts, clothes, boots, weapons (custom-made guns in-

stead of swords) and steeds (souped-up, open-topped cars). They're full of bravado and posturing. And occasionally they turn deadly.

What isn't clear is why Romeo looks and acts so ordinary among this bunch of sensational characters. He's a kid your grandmother would love, while his cousin Benvolio and a few other kinsmen sport orangey or pink buzz-cuts and are plastered with jewelry and tattoos. Romeo's friend Mercutio (black actor Harold Perrineau) is an outrageous cross-dresser who seems to have dropped in from another movie, or perhaps another planet. Maybe that's why his speech is almost incomprehensible.

Bard gets buzzed

Shakespeare's wonderfully musical language gets a buzz-cut of its own, courtesy of Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce who adapted the play (Luhrmann also directed). A lot of the dialogue is simply gone, while some of it has been changed. Maybe the film makers considered Shakespeare's entire story too taxing on abilities of the current rock generation.

What's left of Shakespeare's language sounds at first rather odd coming out the mouths of teenaged urban gangsters, but the listener adapts to the anachronism surprisingly quickly.

If there are audience comprehension problems they are

Shakespeare for the MTV generation

caused either by the young actors' often mealy-mouthed enunciation or by the fact that a blaring soundtrack, gunshots, squealing tires and helicopter rotors often obliterate the dialogue. From Baz Luhrmann's point of view, that probably doesn't matter much. This is a visual extravaganza. (The seasoned adult actors do much better with Shakespeare's language; understandably, Irish stage actor Pete Postlethwaite as Friar Laurence puts in the most believable performance.)

The urban updating doesn't entirely mesh with the spirit of the play. The fact that Romeo and Juliet immediately marry (and *before* they sleep together) will seem alien to modern teenagers; and the gallantry and restraint shown by the fighting Capulets and Montagues (only one dead on each side instead of a real gangland bloodbath) seems almost quaint, if refreshing. Then, of course, there's the touching weirdness of these teenagers literally killing themselves for each other's love.

Strange juxtapositions

Luhrmann shot the film in Mexico City and Veracruz, playing up the garish nature of the Catholic icons in that culture, including a huge statue of Christ that can seemingly be seen for miles; a baroque, candle-studded grotto for private devotion in Juliet's room in her father's mansion; casket-shaped flower arrangements implanted with neon crosses, lined up on each side of the cathedral aisle at Juliet's (mock) funeral; and a veritable sea of candles, flowers and statuary surrounding her coffin. Even Friar Laurence (who is a sympathetic character) looks like a gaudy guru wearing a flower-bedecked Hawaiian shirt.

It's hard to know if Luhrmann is "making a statement" with such visual excesses related to Catholicism, or whether he would argue he's simply telling Latin American Catholicism like it is. But is "Verona Beach" in Mexico or Latin America — or Los Angeles? Or does it matter?

Luhrmann mixes nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. The Capulets and Montagues are a montage of visibly Italian, Hispanic, black and non-ethnic-

looking whites. Kenneth Branagh disregarded color lines in *Much Ado About Nothing* when he cast a black man and white man as brothers. It worked in Branagh's film; here such casting works more to confuse the audience about identities than to render racial, ethnic and cultural lines irrelevant. The viewer has to keep mentally reminding himself which characters are Capulets and which are Montagues. Maybe Luhrmann intended that to be ironically funny.

There are amusing in-jokes, too, which appropriate Shakespeare's language and time: the messenger which misplaces Friar Laurence's urgent, potentially life-saving message to Romeo is a courier service called "Posthaste"; and a burnt out movie house is called the Globe Theatre.

Robust at 400

Set amidst all the noise and frenetic action is Romeo and Juliet's love story. Claire Danes makes a fairly convincing Juliet,

now luminous, now moody. Leonardo DiCaprio is a likeable Romeo. But they have to fight for top billing with all the visual action and glitz. Much of their relationship seems to take place underwater, in the Capulet swimming pool; of course being underwater does tend to limit dialogue.

With the exception of a couple of poignant moments, little of the genuine emotion and tragedy of Shakespeare's play makes its way to the screen. This is not exactly "Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*," as the title would have us believe.

Yet I would recommend this film for teenaged audiences, both as a story many cuts above most films aimed at young audiences and as a take-off point for introducing Shakespeare. Young people will discover why Shakespeare has lasted 400 years; why his work can stand just about any treatment, re-setting, updating and revising; why not even Hollywood can kill him.

Info highway 'NewFrontier' for Transworld Radio

CARY, N.C. (TWR) — What began as an intercontinental vision for superpower radio now extends to cyberspace. As Trans World Radio (TWR) approaches its 43rd year of bringing the gospel to the world by radio, the international Christian broadcaster is now taking its message into homes in a new way: through the internet's information highway. On Nov. 1, TWR officially joined 60 other Christian ministries in an evangelical presence on the Gospel Communications Network.

TWR's homepage can be found at <http://www.gospelcom.net/twr/> on the World Wide Web.

A ministry of Gospel Films of Muskegon, Mich., GCN is a co-operative and strategic alliance of 62 national and international religious organizations that are teaming together to communicate how their ministries are helping to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

TWR's home page enables

people to discover more about the growing influence of this international ministry, which broadcasts more than 1,000 hours of Gospel programs each week in 120 languages via 11 primary transmitting sites and by satellite. The website showcases what God is doing in the lives of people around the world through missionary radio.

Features include inspirational letters from listeners whose lives have been changed by the broadcasts; a sketch of TWR's founder, Dr. Paul E. Freed; and an in-depth interview with president Thomas J. Lowell. Also available are program schedules, travelogues from missionary staff trips, rundowns from the different regions into which TWR airs its programs, and a colorful and creative section just for children known as "Radio Kids!"

A Canadian visiting the Website told TWR, "Your site is absolutely excellent."

Church

CRC conservatives want to form 'theologically identified' classes

Others lay plans for secession

Marian Van Til, with files from URNS.

SOUTH HOLLAND, Ill. — A group of 219 Christian Reformed self-proclaimed conservatives met in South Holland, Illinois, early this month to discuss their future in — or outside

of — the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

Calling themselves an interclassical conference of Christian Reformed conservatives, these ministers, elders and deacons narrowly rejected a proposal to secede from the CRC because Synod 1996 did not overturn Synod 1995's decision to allow the ordination of women.

What the conference did do

was urge the CRC synod to "make it possible for them to remain in the CRC" by allowing them to form "at least four theologically identified classes"; that is, to allow the churches of which the attendees are members to band together to form classes with other likeminded churches.

Synod 1996 set a precedent for such classes by allowing classes to transfer a congregation to a different classis, in one case, to be with others who support ordaining women and in the other case, to be with those who

oppose it.

The interclassical conference's official proposal will ask Synod 1997 to agree to the formation of these new classes with the understanding that each would "accept the absolute authority of the Bible as well as the subordinate authority of the Three Forms of Unity as our confessions"; "agree in faith and practice to the 'statement of faith' presented by the 1995 Interclassical Conference"; "agree to be governed by the Church Order of the CRCNA as it existed prior to Synod 1995, with

the exception of recognizing fraternal relations with the GKN [Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the CRC's 'mother church']; and "agree to remain members of their theologically identified classis [and thus, the CRC] until at least the conclusion of Synod 2000."

The vote in favor of organizing conservative classes was 75 to 68, causing dissenters from 15 congregations to call a separate meeting during the last hour of the conference to lay plans for secession from the CRC.

Tökes elected head of Hungarian Reformed

DEBRECEN, Hungary (REC) — The World Federation of Hungarian Calvinists has elected Bishop Laszlo Tökes of Romania as its president. The Federation met in Debrecen, Hungary, in early August.

The federation said in a declaration they saw themselves as "carriers of values that... can promote the process by which the people of Europe seek a path to unity." The Hungarians also seek to protect the rights to their own language, and their intellectual and cultural assets.

In Romania, where the Hungarians form a large minority, there may be some opposition. The Romanian state secretariat for religious affairs sent an observer to some federation sessions held in Romania (near Debrecen). That bureau may report on potential "anti-Romanian" elements, and seek to prevent future federation meetings in Romania.

CRC seceders form new denomination

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Thirty-six congregations that have left the Christian Reformed Church in recent years have formed a new denomination. At a meeting in October delegates officially formed the United Reformed Churches in North America (URC).

Fourteen of the churches are in the United States and 22 are in Canada. Taken together, the URC represents 8,000 of the approximately 25,000 members the CRC has lost since 1992.

Most of the congregations left the CRC because of their opposition to ordaining women. The URC's church order allows only men to serve in all church offices.

This first synod of the new church also ruled that all congregations will follow the same

liturgical forms, those of the CRC in the 1976 edition. There was some resistance to including marriage forms in that provision, but the meeting overruled them.

The URC is also allowing one year for other congregations to join them as charter members. After the first year, new members will be received only by a two-third vote of the synod.

Francophone African churches create Reformed alliance

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Several newer French-speaking Reformed churches have formed an African Reformed Alliance. The members are all known as Reformed Confessing churches and are from Benin, Burundi, Cameroon,

Ivory Coast, Togo and Zaire. These churches were all formed or nurtured by the French radio ministry, *Perspectives Reformees*, a Chicago-based ministry of the Christian Reformed Church's Back to God Hour.

Britain's top preachers chosen by College of Preachers

LONDON (EP) — Fortunately, there were no Nike logos evident, and winners won't be getting endorsements with McDonald's, but five of Great Britain's most eloquent preachers gathered recently in London for a "preach-off."

The result? Rev. William Anderson, a 65-year-old Roman Catholic from Aberdeen, Scotland, won the Preacher of the Year Award from the ecumenical College of Preachers.

The event is designed to raise

preaching standards throughout Great Britain. Finalists were chosen through unannounced visits to churches, and they participated in a final competition, delivering 10-minute sermons before a congregation and panel of judges.

Anderson described his winning technique — which might or might not grab Reformed congregations: "You need sincerity, clarity and one or two jokes. You have to make it light, otherwise boredom sets in."

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Church

City cancels tradition of invocations after pastor delivers stinging prayer

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. (EP) — When the Brooklyn Center, Minn., city council invited the Rev. Steve Loopstra to deliver the invocation before a July meeting, they expected a routine blessing. What they got was an earful.

Loopstra, pastor of Northbrook Alliance Church in suburban Minneapolis, had delivered standard invocations before. But this time, he came prepared with an invocation first delivered by the Rev. Joe Wright of Wichita at the opening session of the 1995 Kansas Legislature.

Repentance call not popular

Loopstra, who downloaded the invocation from the Internet, says, "I felt it was really excellent and reflected my heart." The prayer, which got national attention after Paul Harvey read it on one of his broadcasts, speaks against welfare, abortion, homosexuality, pornography and more.

It was a prayer of repentance, and when Loopstra was finished the Brooklyn Center city council was indeed sorry — sorry they had invited Loopstra to give the invocation. The city council responded in August by voting to discontinue the 35-year tradition of invocations, and later voted to observe a moment of

silence rather than have a formal invocation.

"This opened the door to anybody being able to come up say anything political that they wanted under the guise of a prayer," explains Kathleen Carmody, the council member who authored the resolution to end the invocations. "If someone was a Muslim and wanted to speak against Christianity we would have to allow that. Loopstra was opposed to lesbians, but a lesbian minister could come and speak in favor of the gay lifestyle. If he can do it anybody can do it. The moment of silence keeps it under control. Most of the members still wanted not so much to have a prayer, but to have to opportunity for prayer."

Loopstra insists that the prayer was not meant to cause controversy or to attack others, but rather to confess society's shortcomings before God. "A lot of prayer is confessional, and God hears a prayer that begins with confession and opens that door," Loopstra explains. "Once the sin is confessed His blessing can come. My feeling was if I wanted to pray a prayer that God could bring the blessing on the city council, I needed a prayer that would open the doors of blessing with true confession."

CRWRC responds to Rwandan refugees in Africa's Great Lakes region

BURLINGTON, Ont. (CRWRC) — The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC), the relief and development agency of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRC), is responding to the crisis in Zaire and the surrounding Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

A CRWRC representative is already in nearby Burundi, where CRWRC has already been supporting a long-term resettlement program for Rwandan refugees. CRWRC staff in neighboring Kenya are planning for food relief, water provision, and sanitation measures. Volunteer workers will be placed as soon as conditions allow.

CRWRC's partnership with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank allows food distribution to refugees most in need. Canadian Foodgrains Bank staff have already visited the area to assess needs and develop possible response for CRWRC and other groups.

In the near future, CRWRC will be there, likely in Rwanda and Burundi, to help with refugee settlement. This plan involves distribution of seeds and farming tools to help needy families provide their own food. CRWRC will also work with Christian partners and churches in the region to bring reconciliation among warring groups, to help the Great Lakes region in

Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
★ Al Wolters

The oracles of Balaam

"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a sceptre will rise out of Israel" (Num.24:17, NIV).

These words are the central message of the climatic fourth oracle which Balaam pronounced over the people of Israel shortly before they entered the promised land. It is the high point of the seven oracles which he delivered. Here are some reflections on the meaning of these prophecies.

Although the series concludes with three short, unsolicited announcements of doom over foreign nations, it begins with three longer, officially commissioned and formally staged prophecies, which announce not curses, but progressively greater blessings for Israel, emphasizing especially military success. Then, after Balak has angrily dismissed Balaam, the climactic blessing comes in the fourth and central oracle: "A star will come out of Jacob; a sceptre will rise out of Israel."

As Moses puts it: "The Lord your God would not listen to Balaam but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you" (Deut.23:5; cf. Neh.13:2). In and through the hostile machinations of Balak, God blesses his people, and blessing is the mark of the love relationship between God and those blessed. That is the primary faith instruction which these oracles give us.

Five concentric contexts

To appreciate the full significance of this faith instruction we need to see the oracles in a number of concentric contexts within the Bible. Within the context of the narrative of Balaam and Balak in Numbers 22-24, these oracles demonstrate God's sovereign protection of his people against a planned spiritual attack, of which they themselves are unaware and which they can do nothing to avert.

Within the context of the book of Numbers as a whole, the oracles signal the dramatic return of God's favor after the punishment of the unfaithful generation in the 40 years of wandering.

Within the context of the entire Pentateuch, the oracles reaffirm and expand the patriarchal promises as Israel stands on the threshold of Canaan. Like a flourish of trumpets before the curtain raises, new promises are proclaimed, just as "the theme of the Pentateuch" (the promise of plentiful descendants and a land of their own given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) is about to reach its fulfillment.

Within the context of the Old Testament as a whole, the oracles represent the promise not only of national prosperity and military pre-eminence but specifically of a great and mighty king, a promise that was initially fulfilled in David and his conquests of surrounding nations (see 2 Sam. 8:1-14), but which pointed forward to the coming Messianic king who was to be David's son. This messianic understanding of the promised star is already reflected in the early Jewish Targums (Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Bible).

Finally, within the context of the entire history of revelation, the oracles are especially significant as an announcement of Jesus Christ and his universal kingship over all nations. This interpretation is consistent with both the traditional Jewish understanding of the oracles and the unanimous exegesis of the early church, and may be alluded to in the New Testament itself (cf. Rev. 22:16).

The blessings promised in the oracles now apply to the church of Christ, the new Israel, especially as it engages in spiritual warfare (cf. Eph. 6). But the message of Balaam's oracles also applies directly and literally in such statements as the following: "There is no sorcery against Jacob, no divination against Israel" (Num.23:23). The demonic cannot prevail against God's sovereign protection of his chosen people.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. The above is a slightly adapted version of an article in the forthcoming New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis.

Central Africa achieve long-term peace and stability.

CRWRC helps where there is the most need and the least help. This often involves reaching the most vulnerable victims of a crisis. CRWRC has the experience of 35 years of international crisis response. Its relief, rehabilitation, and reconciliation response to the 1994 Rwandan refugee crisis is well known and respected.

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Features

WINTER

Jacoba Bos

Winter. Some people endure it stoically; others escape to warm lands and sunny beaches; and most of us can't seem to live through it without a daily dose of complaints about it.

We all know that as long as the earth remains, winters will be with us. If you are like some of us and you actually *like* winter (!), you don't need to read this. But if you can't wait for spring, read on.

The following alphabetical list may help you find some good things to do in the cold and wonderful winter season.

A good way to start is to **APPRECIATE** the people you work with and **ATTEND** those meetings which seem to be as numerous as raisins in fruitcakes during the winter months. Someone needs your wisdom, input and common sense at those functions, so resist the temptation to stay in your cosy home on a cold evening.

Read **BOOKS**.

Reading is one of life's greatest pleasures, enjoyed by young and old, rich and poor. Curling up with a good book on a grey winter day can take you to the depths of the sea, to a romantic place far away, or bring you close to a family which is facing the same trials as you are experiencing. Printing technology is a great blessing, and it's one of the many ways in which God shows his love for us.

Take a **COURSE**.

This will open your mind and broaden your horizon. If you're fortunate enough to live near a university or college, the choice of what you can learn in a few evenings is almost unlimited, ranging from computer instruction to travel adventures and lectures about great composers. Community colleges also provide interesting courses in small towns. For a small fee you can learn to arrange flowers, fix a small engine or become friends with your word processor.

DRAW a picture of the scene outside your window.

If you are like most of us, you can't draw a straight line, but you'll discover that there are not many straight lines in the outline of a tree and the delicate curves of a wind-whipped snow bank,

where shadows of the picket fence create a beautiful array of gently patterned lines and shapes.

DOODLING is the next best thing to drawing. Experts claim that doodling relieves tension and helps you to listen (that's why you can never find a blank piece of paper by your phone).

ENTERTAIN.

A meal shared with people you love is another one of life's simple pleasures, made even better by winter. Lingering over a good meal and good conversation in a relaxed setting is a delightful way to fill a long winter evening. Your guests will appreciate your meatloaf or sweet-and-sour meatballs just as much as they will roasted duckling in a fancy restaurant. And chances are that the shy, single person you've never really talked to at church would love to be included in this winter activity.

FERTILIZE YOUR HOUSEPLANTS.

They'll reward you in due time with healthy foliage and multiple blooms. If you can't wait that long, buy yourself a pot of spring bulbs. For a few dollars you'll have instant color and cheer. For a real spring tonic, buy an amaryllis bulb in a pot and watch it miraculously unfold into majestic flowers on a tall and graceful stem.

GO outside and play in the snow with your kids, the neighbor's kids or your grandchildren. Let the child in you enjoy the pleasures of making snow angels and snowmen (or women). It's amazing what you can make out of the fluffy white stuff kids love and every true blooded Canadian adult is suppose to hate. A romp in the snow will leave you feeling invigorated and grateful for a warm home and dry socks.

Work on your **HOBBIES**.

Without the pressure of outside work, winter is an ideal time to indulge in your favorite pastime, whether that's model ship building, cross-stitching, wood carving or stamp collecting. It's a most rewarding feeling to see the work of your hands take on beautiful shape, or to motivate your brain by solving an intricate puzzle. For a "together" hobby, try working

on a 3000-piece jigsaw puzzle with your family. If you're still on speaking terms when the puzzle is complete, you have mastered some real problem-solving skills.

Do your **INCOME TAX** return.

If you get professionals to do this, then maybe this is the year to do at least some of this annual ritual yourself. As you add up your donation receipts, say a prayer for those willing workers who are feeding the hungry, healing the sick and bringing Good News of salvation with the help of your financial support.

machine, try the much cheaper and easier alternative and laugh your way to fitness.

KNEAD your bread dough. And watch it rise and bake to a golden crusted loaf.

Your bread will be the envy of your neighbors, who'll be knocking on your door on the pretense of borrowing a cup of sugar, but actually just wanting to savor the tantalizing aroma coming from your oven. If you lack the time for baking bread, try making some play dough and join your kids in kneading, punching and shaping this substance. Kneading is good for the

dreary days, close the drapes or blinds, light the fireplace or a few candles and enjoy the scenery of your cosy living room.

Eat **NUTRITIONALLY**.

We are blessed to be living in a country in which winter vegetables and fruits are full of vitamins and minerals, so there's no excuse to not eat right during the cold season. Besides our homegrown produce, we also have access to citrus fruits which are a good source of Vitamin C. It is especially true in winter that if we want to feel well, we must first eat well.

ORGANIZE your closets and dressers and get rid of those sweaters and boots you haven't worn for the past five years. Goodwill Industries will gladly see to it that they keep someone else warm and dry.

PARTICIPATE. The government knows the importance of getting us to participate in programs to help us lead healthier lives, so an advertising campaign is underway to get us moving. We'd do well to take their advice, especially in winter when it's tempting to just sit and watch TV. Nearly every town has a shopping mall where people can walk in climatized comfort, so there's no excuse to leave those Reeboks you got for Christmas in the hall closet.

QUILT.

If you are like most of us, you lack the time and skills for this old craft, the results of which have beautified many homes and kept thousands of people warm. In our fast paced world, the gentle art of quilting is making a come-back, with quilting clubs getting together to produce beautiful works, intricately designed and meticulously sewn by hand. Some of these works of art can be seen at fall fairs and special exhibitions.

REMINISCE.

When the weather is dull and dreary, get out your slides, movies and photographs and relive the boat trip you took and the barbecue on your deck. See again the brilliant fall colors recorded on your camcorder, and recapture the feeling of sitting around the campfire or the thrill of picking the first beans from your garden.

SING a song.

Someone once said that "singing is both a thermometer and a thermostat; it reveals and raises our spiritual temperament." To chase away winter's gloom you can't beat a lustily belted out rendition of your favorite song. If your voice refuses to co-



Should your returns show that you have to pay more tax, then it's good to remember that without taxes we would be without healthcare, police protection and social services, just to mention a few of the things your tax dollars are paying for.

Tell a **JOKE**.

Nothing lifts the winter-weary spirit like a good laugh. Already in Bible times people knew that health and humor go together like a horse and carriage. It took modern medicine years to discover this fact. These health professionals are like the slow professor who, upon hearing a joke in the morning, wouldn't laugh until evening. Laughter is a great tension reliever and excellent exercise for muscles and internal organs. So before you go out and buy that rowing

hands and the head, strengthening muscles and clearing the mind of winter weariness.

LISTEN to music. Surgeons do it while performing delicate operations; teenagers do it while studying; farmers do it while milking contented cows; and homemakers do their dusting and cleaning to it. Listening to recorded music is a fine and affordable pleasure. Good music can energize and educate us. It can move us to tears and rejuvenate our sagging spirits.

MARVEL at the beauty of the winter landscape.

Bright starry nights, clear blue skies, gorgeous sunsets, sunlight on snow, creating sparkling diamonds in the soft whiteness, hoar frost clinging to fences and trees — it's all there in God's creation for us to enjoy and marvel at. And on grey and

operate you can always sing a song in your heart. (This is also biblical).

TOUCH someone by telephone.

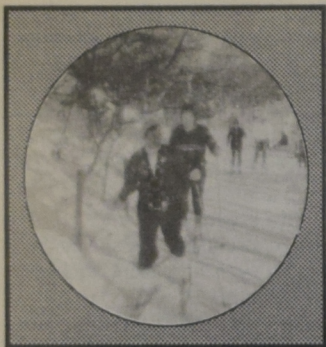
It will lift the person on the other end of the line right out of the doldrums and you'll be delighted with the sound of her voice. It's much cheaper than driving the many miles that separate you, and it's the ideal way to show you care.

UPDATE your address book, photo albums and your recipe files while winter storms rage. You're bound to come across some real treasures. Make it a point to make easily accessible lists and files. This gives satisfaction and a real sense of accomplishment.

VOLUNTEER your time.

Your church and other organizations will welcome you with open arms, while you will be on the receiving end because few things in life are as gratifying and rewarding as giving of yourself to others. It is also one way of living up to God's command to love our neighbor as ourselves.

WRITE a letter to a friend or relative, or to the editor of a newspaper, or to your govern-



ment representative. Your friends will treasure your words, the editor is interested in your opinion, and government officials will regard your letter as the voice of a thousand people. God can use the written word to influence the mighty and to encourage the humble.

X-COUNTRY skiing is one of winter's ultimate joys. Sliding effortlessly over smooth snow under azure skies with the clear crisp air tingling your face is an exhilarating experience. It's also a safe and easy sport which people of all ages can enjoy.

Jacoba Bos is a freelance writer and long-time CC contributor who lives in Strathroy, Ont.

Maria Stam

When you prepare your list of Christmas gifts for family and friends, you may be reminded of presents you received in the past. You may still cherish and enjoy some of these gifts, while others have been forgotten, stored in drawers and closets or transformed into something more useable.

One Christmas gift I received some years ago was six napkins made of white batiste and trimmed all around with lace. At first sight they seemed a real asset to our dining table. But they were so delicate that I didn't dare use them, afraid I would probably not be able to remove fruit or other food stains. They ended up hidden in a drawer and were kept there for two years.

Then one day, as I wanted to buy new doilies for my bedroom dresser and chest, I remembered the napkins and discovered that I could sew four of them together to be used as a runner for the dresser; and I could use the other two to make a shorter runner to be put on the chest. When I saw how decorative they looked, I was glad to have found a purpose for this seemingly extravagant Christmas gift.

Another time when a colorful silk scarf did not match my coat or jacket, I folded it several times and wrapped it around a plain summer straw-hat, transforming the simple protection against the sun into a fashionable hat. As ashtrays became obsolete in our non-smoking family, a small ashtray carved into the soapstone foot of a sculpted beaver turned into a candleholder. Gifts which seem impractical at a first glance can often be put to good use with a little imagination.

Seeking gifts that inspire

Giving becomes a spiritual act when we choose gifts which continue to inspire. Good books can have such a quality. Over

True giving is an act of love

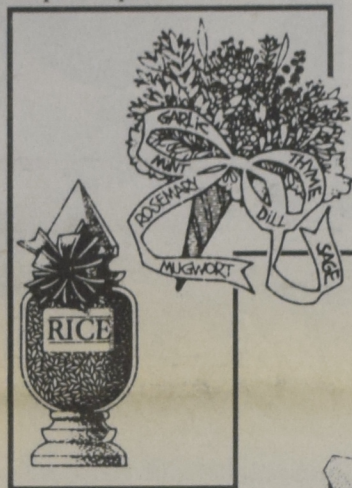
the years I have received a number of them to which I return for enjoyment and guidance time and again. They were carefully chosen with my interests in mind.

When we are trying to find the perfect presents we have to

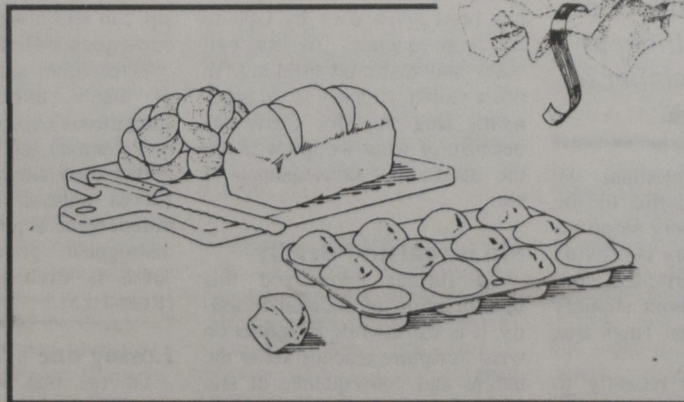
we did not put enough effort into our search. Giving something practical can easily develop into an every-year-repetition. We all, at one time or another, have accumulated presents like scarves, gloves, ties and socks, hoping next time the givers would have better ideas.

Cost is not the key

Expensive gifts are not always the most appreciated ones.



ask ourselves: what are the wishes and preferences of each person on our list? Choosing something because it appeals to us is no



A simple item selected with care for just that one particular person can be more pleasing than the most elaborate present we buy because we feel obliged to

give something.

Choosing a gift for the person who has everything can be difficult. In such a case I always find it helpful to give a subscription to a magazine or journal in line with his or her interests. Once in a while we may please someone by selecting a more luxurious present — for instance, a ticket to a concert or

theatre performance, or some perfume or lotion the receiver cannot afford to buy.

A homemade gift can sometimes be more meaningful than a present bought because it represents not only the use of our hands but also our creative ability used to please that particular person.

No selfish expectations

More difficult than buying or making a present is the giving of oneself. This is the gift which needs first of all self-questioning about the motive of our giving to assure that we are able to give freely and honestly. Only when we set aside our self-interest and expectations does giving become a matter of the heart, free of intellectual reasoning. A Dutch proverb says: *Do well but do not look back.*

Giving of oneself means being an attentive listener, a compassionate and patient visitor to the sick, and an unbiased advocate for the poor. In our churches and the community at large many volunteers give generously of their time and energy. They, and others who serve God and their fellow men and women, are following Christ's example of selfless giving.

During this Advent and Christmas season as we reflect on Jesus, the Perfect Giver, who came into the world poor and

...Only when we set aside our self-interest and expectations does giving become a matter of the heart, free of intellectual reasoning....

vulnerable for our sake, we are reminded that true giving is an act of love. It is based on the desire to make others happy without asking for something in return.

Maria Stam is a freelance writer who lives in London, Ont.

Feature

The slippery slope

John E. Stronks

Not so long ago I was having a conversation with an obstetrician and abortionist, sharing my excitement about the birth of apparently healthy twins at a gestational age of 28 weeks. He responded with disdain, asserting that we have gone too far in trying to save such infants. After all, what if they grow up to have a learning disorder? he mused.

We have witnessed in our society a rapid progression from the legalization of divorce to the realization of widespread family breakdown. Teenage sexual activity is now taken for granted. Feminism has yielded to witchcraft and other sorts of New Age religion. Homosexuality has come out of the closet and now is in the forefront of the legislative agenda, even to the extent that some are advocating the recognition of pedophilia as normative.

We have witnessed the liberalization of abortion laws only to be faced with the wholesale slaughter of tens of thousands of infants annually and the emergence of issues such as euthanasia, assisted suicide and mercy killing. Just a few years ago government-run lotteries were introduced; now gaming has become big business

Canadian society. Like never before, Canadian Christians have been challenged to think about moral issues, to search the Scriptures for relevant insights, to formulate positions and responses. To this end, it is my desire as a Christian physician to share some of my thoughts and experiences.

Legitimate arguments?

Ethicists often rely on "slippery slope" arguments (also known as "wedge" or "domino" arguments) to explain this seemingly inevitable and progressive liberalization of societal morality. These arguments claim that a liberalizing decision or policy would put those who accept it on a "slippery slope" which would result in their sliding toward further immorality. Ethicists will appeal to various philosophies, to legal precedents or to observations of other societies to substantiate their slippery slope arguments.

Proponents of traditional values have often appealed to slippery slope arguments in an attempt to caution against liberalizing laws, while proponents of the liberalization of society have attempted to discredit slippery slope arguments to advance their cause.



"We have witnessed the liberalization of abortion laws only to be faced with the wholesale slaughter of tens of thousands of infants annually and the emergence of issues such as euthanasia, assisted suicide and mercy killing."

[became] filled with every kind of wickedness" (vs. 18-32).

Reflecting on this passage and on the state of Canadian society, I began to appreciate that this seemingly inevitable and progressive liberalization of societal morality described above is best explained by the knowledge that the society in which we live has been given over by God to the consequences of its evil ways and distorted thinking. In other words, slippery slope arguments ring true for Christians because of what we know about the nature and consequence of sin.

Sin is real and deadly

To further understand this liberalization of societal morality, it is worthwhile to reflect on what Scripture teaches about the nature and consequence of sin. In doing so, I wish to make four points: sin is destructive; sin is progressive; sin is aggressive; sin is generational.

Collectively, these points will contribute to our understanding of why we see what we do in the society in which we live.

1. Sin is destructive.

Sin is destructive of everything that is good about God's creation (Rom.8:22). Ultimately, sin is destructive of life itself

(Rom.6:23). But the destructiveness of sin is not always immediately obvious. Rather its destructiveness is more often insidious. Consider how self-esteem is eroded away by promiscuity or abuse; how a marriage is destroyed by infidelity; how trust is destroyed by lies; or a friendship by gossip. Sin will always reap its own consequence (Gal.6:7).

Over time, sin is destructive of one's moral conscience. Repetitious exposure to sin dulls one's senses and conditions the unrepentant sinner to accept the sin as normal. Eventually the unrepentant sinner is unable to distinguish good from evil. Truth is exchanged for a lie (Rom.1:25).

Losing one's 'hearing'

Of the one who is "determined to persist in disobedience," Bonhoeffer observes, "At first he was aware enough of his disobedience, but with his increasing hardness of heart that awareness grows even fainter, and in the end he becomes so enmeshed that he loses all capacity for hearing the Word, and faith is quite impossible."

It is imperative we appreciate that the society in which we live is rapidly losing its moral con-

science. In the opening paragraph I tell of a physician who has gone from being an abortionist to being an advocate for infanticide. I was taken back by his comments at first, but now I appreciate that I should have expected nothing else.

2. Sin is progressive.

The consequence of slavery to sin is an ever increasing wickedness (Rom.6:19).

James Dobson, describing an individual's experience with sin, writes, "I've found it interesting to observe men and women who decide to leave the straight life.... rarely do they make a sudden left or right turn and plunge into... a differing lifestyle. Instead, they make very small, safe departures... and then return for a time of evaluation... such [departures] are almost always progressive unless deliberately quenched."

Sin is progressive in part because it never satisfies. Sin creates in us a continual lust for more sin (Eph.4:10). The one who serves money never has enough; the one who seeks sexual gratification always looks for new and more intense experiences. Accordingly, we err if we think society will be satisfied with the status quo of its liberalization.

Over time, sin is destructive of one's moral conscience. Repetitious exposure to sin dulls one's senses and conditions the unrepentant sinner to accept the sin as normal. Eventually the sinner is unable to distinguish good from evil.

for government and a normal source of entertainment for many Canadians, even for many Christians. What was once pornography is now standard fare for advertisers and movie makers. And while some young children are indulging in their parents' collection of pornographic videos, we still wonder why we are hearing, almost daily, news reports about serial sexual predators.

God allows unrepentant sinners their way

This is a sad but true reflection of Canadian society. And it is disturbing, especially for Christians who are feeling increasingly repressed as a minority voice in the shaping of

Intuitively, as Christians, we have been sympathetic to the proponents of slippery slope arguments. And history is proving this sympathy warranted. But why? What is it about slippery slope arguments that rings true to Christians?

I was prompted recently to ask this question while listening to a sermon on Romans 1. Here Paul writes: "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth.... Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind.... [Therefore], their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened...; they

Sin not only consumes the individual progressively, it also consumes society progressively. It should be apparent to one observing the advancement of change in our society that liberalization of laws does not occur overnight. The Canadian experience with the issue of abortion is a case in point.

Christians need to be wise to the reality that sin is progressive. For just as it is important to squelch sin early in its inception in our personal lives, it is important that we work hard to quench society's proposed liberalizing change early, and not tire in the face of seemingly tireless advances by the advocates of liberalizing change.

Christians need to be wise to the reality that sin is progressive. It is important that we work hard to quench society's proposed liberalizing change early.

3. Sin is aggressive.

Sin is aggressive in how it controls the individual. Paul says, "Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it (Rom.7:20)." There comes a point at which sin controls our life. One struggling with an addiction will understand this well. We must appreciate that the society in which we live is in the grip of sin.

Sin is also aggressive towards the Truth. "The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law nor can it do so" (Rom.8:4). Christians often express surprise at the degree to which society is hostile towards the gospel message and the degree to which various groups are determined in the pursuit of their liberalizing agenda. But this should be no surprise. The society in which we live is decidedly anti-Christian.

A crossroads

As a medical student I encountered this aggressive aspect of sin when I was assigned to a teenage family planning clinic — really a birth control and abortion clinic. After the staff

learned I was counselling in favor of the choices of abstinence and life, I was quickly banned from the clinic and hauled before the dean for a disciplinary session. This experience was a crossroads in my life. It is with joy and peace that I still counsel in favor of the choices of abstinence and life (see Jer.6:16).

The temptation for Christians trying to stem the tide of change in society is to seek a middle ground, to compromise with society. To do this, however, would cause me worry about our ability to preserve the integrity of the Christian community. For sin is never compromising! To compromise is to flirt with sin. And those who flirt with sin are left vulnerable and easily ensnared in its trap (Gal.6:1).

4. Sin is generational.

Even many Christians are reluctant to accept this aspect of the nature and consequence of sin. Yet Scripture is clear. The second commandment reads, "I am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments" (Ex.20:5).

From 'brainwashing' to blessing

When I was a boy I used to think that I was being brainwashed into being a Christian. I now appreciate that my knowledge of Scripture is the greatest gift my parents could have given me. But not only did I learn about the Christian faith from my parents, I inherited an entire way of life, a value system rooted in Scripture. What a blessing for me and my children.

The same is true about the society in which we live. So much of what is still good about our society is a residual blessing from the faithfulness of our forebears carried forth in the Judeo-Christian tradition. But increasingly we are no longer a society defined by Judeo-Christian values. Accordingly, it is frightful to think of what the future might entail.

The real tragedy of the society in which we live is how children are being set up for more tragedy. Do today's

children really stand a chance of knowing the wholesomeness and harmony, the peace and joy that is inherent in the Christian way of life?

So, then, it is the nature and consequence of sin itself that explains this seemingly inevitable and progressive slide toward societal immorality. Though it may be our natural inclination to want to see the good in society, we are really left with no option but to view the society in which we live as a society of unrepentant sinners, given over by God

all your impurities.... I will give you a new heart.... And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws" (Ez.36:25-27).

Paul puts it this way: "You no longer live as the Gentiles do.... They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.... You, however,... were taught... to put off your old self,... to be made new in the attitude of your

For this reason we Christians are left with no option but to share with society this truth of God's love.

Living for Jesus

We need to share this truth in two ways. First, we need to *live* the Truth. In the words of Peter: "Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God...." (1 Peter 2:11-12).

Not one of us, of course, is without sin. "There is no one righteous, not even one" (Rom.3:10). Are we, then, prepared not only personally, but also collectively as a Christian community, to take a long and serious look at our own lives, to see our own sin, to see to what extent we are going along with society in its sinful misdirectedness?

Second, we need to *speak* the Truth. God has given us a message of hope to share with our despairing society. So, then, do we dare to ask society to heed these words of God: "I am the Lord your God who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you on the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to my commandments, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea" (Is.48:17-18), "Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall" (Ez.18:30)?

No to sin, Yes to sinners

Let us do so, guided by the words of Jude: "Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear — hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh" (vs. 22-23). In other words, "May we be enabled to say, No to the sin and Yes to the sinner. May we withstand our foes, and yet hold out to them the Word of the gospel which woos and wins the souls of men" (Bonhoeffer).

John Stronks is a medical doctor who lives and practises in Chatham, Ont.



"Just a few years ago government-run lotteries were introduced; now gaming has become big business for government and a normal source of entertainment for many Canadians, even for many Christians."

to the depravity of their own minds and the consequence of their own sin.

Unfortunately, left as such, this is a despairing conclusion. And society is indeed full of despair.

God's love remains

But fortunately God does not abandon the repentant sinner. Listen to what God says, "I will not accuse forever, not will I always be angry... I was enraged by sinful greed; I punished him, and hid my face in anger, yet he kept on in his willful ways. I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; I will guide him and restore comfort to him...." (Is.57:16-18). And God does just this when he sent his only Son, "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

God pledges, "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from

minds, and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph.4:17-24). "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (Gal.5:16).

This is the truth: God so loved us that he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to reconcile to himself all who believe. Then, as we confess our sin and surrender our will to Christ, the Holy Spirit transforms our lives; by his Spirit, God empowers us to live in accordance with his will. And the will of God has always been that we live in righteous obedience, that we may be blessed and his name glorified.

This truth is our defence against the slippery slope of sin. We can be holy, because God is holy (1 Peter 1:15).

But God also loves those in the society in which we live and desires that they, too, believe and be reconciled to himself.

Church / Advice

Church press quotes



Rev. Jacob Kuntz

Youth and parenting

The editor of ChristianWeek (Nov. 5) is worried about today's young generation. He gives examples of the outrageous public behavior of 10-year olds, calls them "cannon fodder for youth gangs." He also sees a pattern here that relates to "adult inattention":

"Thankfully, these are not typical Canadian children, but there are more like this now than there were a decade ago and their numbers are growing... Their callous disregard for people and property is a frightening prospect for the future of our culture. They are the extreme edge of a disturbing development of casual inattention to the well-being of

children, the result of what happens when adult caregivers drop the ball — neglecting to fulfill their responsibilities to raise and nurture their young. The values that make a society civil need to be taught in the home. When that is missing, things quickly fall apart.

"The small things do matter. Our busy lives are increasingly fragmented, and intentional care must be taken not to slice the childcare segment too thin. Quantity time is required along with the quality time. Children accustomed to attentive adults feel respected and will be inclined to accept guidance and discipline they need.

"...Parents who have been dropping the ball will soon be forced to recognize that children raised without proper care learn to be careless; children raised without proper respect will be disrespectful. Sadly, all society suffers the consequences."

Refugees deserve hospitality

ChristianWeek of Sept. 24 contains an editorial about refugees. Many would love to come to North America. But the trouble is, "we see our own prosperity slipping away," and "our own discontent is growing":

"This struggle is nothing new. The Bible is full of stories of displaced peoples who had to depend on kindness of strangers. And the instruction to God's people was given in pretty plain language — aliens were to be

given the same rights as citizens and included in the country's welfare system. And they were to be judged by the same set of laws. They are to be welcomed and held accountable to the standards of the country. Some will undoubtedly prove to be scoundrels and scallywags; others [will be] conscientious and productive. Just like the people who already live here.

"While there are legitimate reasons for nations to take measures to protect the interests of their own citizens, many of the current concerns surrounding refugees and immigrants stem from our own insecurities and selfishness.... For the time being we are in a pretty good position to protect ourselves. But the larger the disparity between rich and poor grows, the

greater the danger of social instability. The signs of this happening are all around us — locally and globally.

"In the end, good Christian people are well advised to live their own lives according to biblical principles which elevate compassion, kindness and generosity. Passages such as Luke 6:20-38 contain relevant but oh-so challenging teaching. Deeply embedded within it lies the golden rule.

"Some years ago I was amazed by the sacrificial efforts a friend had given to help a foreign national with some documentation difficulties. His casual yet genuine explanation was simple. 'If I were in his situation, I'd like someone to do these things for me.' Simple message; tough gospel."

The Newfound- land tragedy

The Anglican Journal (Oct.) devoted much space to "God, Cod and Newfoundland." Newfoundland was called "the province where fishermen used to be":

"In the small town of Burgeo, nearly 30 former fish plant workers have used money from The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (known as TAGS) to retrain as hairdressers. That's one hair-

dresser for every 70 residents in a town whose population is just 2,000. Many others are training as carpenters, electricians, computer programmers and secretaries, but small outport towns need only so many carpenters and electricians. Computer and secretarial jobs are even scarcer.

"The TAGS program, while generous, is widely thought to be ill-conceived. Critics — including recipients of the funding — say that TAGS is training people for jobs that don't exist.

"You look at Burgeo," says Ernest Green, a former fish plant worker and parishioner of St.

John the Evangelist. 'There's hardly any jobs now, and if you are not planning to move.... It's a waste of government money.

"George Anderson, a fisherman who sank \$12,000 into his boat just three years before the moratorium was declared, is living on TAGS but opted not to take retraining. Unlike plant workers, inshore fishermen must agree to get out of fishing before they are eligible for retraining.

"His boat would be difficult to sell even if he wanted to.... It sits idle on shore as he waits for the fishery to resume."

More Church Press Quotes, p. 15...

Peter and Marja



are
IN

Dear P & M:

Can a boyfriend and girlfriend who love each other a lot live together?

Dear Trial Marriage:

Living together without the benefit of marriage vows lacks two things. First, there's no accountability to family or society. And second, there's no lasting commitment to the other person. Without these two things, you have a very unstable environment.

Advocates of common-law living suggest that it's good to experiment with marriage before entering a real marriage. Sort of like test-driving a car or trying out the goods. What they forget, though, is the power of the promise to hold people together. It's the vow made before God and significant people in our lives that sees us through the tough times as well as the good.

In his book *I Pledge You My Troth*, James Olthuis argues that the bonds of "troth" (faithful-

Love is a fulltime commitment

ness, fidelity) provide the guiding boundaries within which couples can be free to be truly open and honest with each other. A pledge of troth removes the uncertainty which prevents real, even painful growth.

Biblically speaking, sexual intercourse is the act of marriage. We continue to believe that two people who are ready to go all the way should also be ready to commit to each other all the way. Love is much more than a feeling; it is a commitment.

Dear P & M:

What's up with Leviticus 19:19?

Dear Old Testament Discoverer:

This verse prohibits mating different kinds of animals, planting fields with two kinds of seeds and wearing clothing woven of two kinds of material. Moses repeats these prohibitions

in Deut. 22:9-11 and adds the reason why: "If you do, not only the crops you plant but also the fruit of the vineyard will be defiled."

In those simpler times these prohibitions made a lot of sense. Crossbreeding might yield infertile offspring, like the mule, a product of cross-breeding a horse and a donkey. Mixing seed might confuse the harvest, with one seed ripening before another. And two kinds of material in the same garment might result in a misshapen coat after washing, since wool shrinks differently than linen.

Beyond these practical concerns, Moses was also concerned for Israel's purity and holiness before God. These agricultural and textile prohibitions symbolized the larger concern of Israel's separation from the pagan nations around them. That sense of separation is also developed in the New Testament

where we're told to be in the world and not of it.

Lev. 19:19 is no longer meant to be taken literally. But this verse certainly challenges us to take to heart Paul's questions in II Cor. 6:14-17 where he asks: "What do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial (i.e., Satan)? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols?"

Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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**Bert Hielema**

I am going to stick my neck out. Chop it off, if you want to. I am going to make an economic forecast, which, if history is any guide, is a rather hazardous undertaking. Of course, it would be easy if I were to rely on conventional sources.

For instance, the Sept. 30 issue of *Fortune* pictures a prominent graph showing the rise of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from a dismal negative of -1 per cent in 1991 to a continuous positive of +2.7 per cent in 1992, 2.3 per cent in 1993 and way up to 4.8 per cent in the first half of 1996. In bold letters the accompanying article predicts: "The Expansion: No End in Sight."

It is true that for 66 months now the U.S. economy — and its satellite, ours — has been growing. The expansion is already the fourth longest on record; since 1834. The consensus of economists is that GDP growth will continue to expand at a rate of 2.1 per cent in the U.S. and (get this!) 3.5 per cent in Canada all through next year. The chief economist of the U.S. Conference Board really is optimistic: "There is virtually no evidence that this cycle will come to an end, absent some kind of stunning shock. It will last through the year 2,000."

Well, there you have it. Prediction made. Case closed.

Or is it? It was late October

1929 when the Great Crash became definite. Just before that notable event, the then most celebrated economist, Prof. Irving Fisher said, "I expect to see the stock market a good deal higher than it is today within a few months." We know now what really happened, even though the cause of the Depression is still being debated.

November 1973 was the onset of another sharp recession. Then too, the people whose job it was to alert their bosses to the impending hard times ahead failed miserably. As a matter of fact, economic forecasters have missed four out of the last five economic slumps, a failure rate of 80 per cent.

Ignores predictions

So, frankly, I would do my faithful readers a disfavor if I paid attention to predictions by the so-called experts, a bias bolstered by re-reading a feature article in the October 1989 *Atlantic* which pictured on its cover in more than bold letters: "The Coming Global BOOM."

I found it fascinating to re-read that article and compare how seven years later, matters really are. The author biased his optimistic forecast on three premises: 1) The integration of the global goods market; 2) the steady increase of income and savings of the average worker; 3) a steady decline in interest rates. Well, he was correct on one point — the manufacturing of goods now is certainly a global affair. However, instead of an increase in wages and savings, there has been a drastic decrease. In the past decade most families in North America have seen their effective income plunge by a depressing 20 per cent and savings have declined to a dismal 4.5 per cent in the U.S. and a little higher in Canada.

Recipe for rebellion

It is true that short-term interest rates have gone down in Canada, basically because economic conditions here have been so bad that continuous cuts are now seen as the only answer. Yet with inflation practically gone, even six per cent is high by history's standards. Have we had a global boom since 1989? NO. A definite no.

I am inclined to try a spoonerism here: since 1989 the world has suffered more from a "boba gloom" than a "global

boom," especially in Europe and Japan. Granted, things look better in the U.S., but more on paper than in reality. There, with the rich getting richer and the poor poorer, a real recipe for rebellion is arising. Also, household debt has become a problem. People used to borrow on the assumption that their income would increase, due to inflation. Now, with wages declining, debt is used to maintain the existing standard of living, a very temporary solution at best, and extremely dangerous.

Debt is not the only danger. A recent article in the *Globe and Mail* compared government spending in the "Golden Eighties" with the Mean Street economy of the '90s. About a decade ago Ottawa returned to the taxpayer \$1.23 for every \$1.00 collected, making everybody happy. Now we have to pay the taxes due then, plus interest, and for every \$1.00 collected, today only 68 cents is returned to us. Government efforts to fight deficits will cost us thousands of jobs, jobs which already are threatened by globalization. Jeremy Rifkin wrote a book recently, predicting *The End of Work*, not only because of globalization but also because of the increasing uses of computer technology.

A downward spiral

Someday in the future we will see a recession. Nobody will deny this. Since 1945 we have seen nine of them, one every five years or so. The most recent one which began in 1990, has been different from all the other ones for two reasons: fewer new jobs have been created in our hesitant recovery; and inflation rates have been historically low, now approaching zero. Both factors can be traced to globalization. When the next recession comes — and it will — we could experience deflation. Deflation means that prices and wages fall. If that happens, fixed interest payments would actually increase as more valuable dollars — worth more because they buy more — must be used. The Depression of the Thirties saw such deflation. Then money increased in value just by keeping it in an old sock under the mattress. Understandably, when prices and wages fall, spending stops, bankruptcies rise, and the economy is caught in a downward spiral which ends in an economic disaster. It is my economic forecast that this

scenario is likely.

What could be the catalyst to cause a sudden decline? It could be an act of God such as a devastating earthquake in Tokyo, but my bet is the automobile industry. The Big Three have made billions of profit on their vans and sport utility vehicles, where their gain per unit is as high as \$10,000, offsetting the losses suffered on passenger cars, particularly the compact kind. Now both Japan and Germany are entering this lucrative gas-guzzler field and an automotive price-war is at hand.

Or it could be the computer industry: here Japan is trying to break U.S. domination and repeat for computers what it did earlier for color television, the auto industry and the stereo business.

Or it could be a war in the Middle East. Or a collapse of the Russian economy. Or repression in Hong Kong when China takes over in a few months. Actually, the stock market is not waiting for a cause to collapse, but for an excuse.

Split-minded

In our world in transition, in which consumers are constantly urged to spend, spend, spend, while they should save, save, save, schizophrenia reigns supreme. It could well be that we churchgoers are especially split-minded (schizophrenic) as we say we love God but in actual life show our disdain for him in the treatment of God in creation. In this time between times — one foot in the past, another poised towards an uncertain future — navigating the treacherous roads is like driving in the fog.

It was easy going yesterday when we had another car's tail lights in front of us. But now the car has turned off and we are adrift in a dense mist. With institutions, churches, families and governments failing to give guidance, or even worse, leading us in the wrong direction, we are on our own in the thick fog, stuck without the confidence that comes with following a trusted leader.

That is my point of view. Peculiar? Paranoid? Pessimistic? Perhaps.

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont., 200 km from Toronto, 200 km from Ottawa. He is active in his church as an elder, occasional preacher, Sunday school teacher, story teller, choir member, Bible study and prayer meeting participant.

'Church Press Quotes' continued**The Bible isn't a handbook**

Reformed Perspective (September), a Canadian Reformed social/political magazine has done some real soul-searching about the direction the magazine ought to take. Some contributors felt that the paper should give firmer biblical direction. But does the Bible give clearcut answers to all the questions of our day? The editor doesn't think so:

"My basic starting point about the content is that what is written must be in agreement with the Scriptures and the confessions. I am also convinced that the Bible is not a handbook which can be consulted to find a direct answer to all the issues which we face in life. The Bible gives guidelines, directives, which we must apply to our problems and in this way find solutions. These solutions may differ from one to the next. I have to reject articles which do not honor the teachings of Scripture.

"Let me come back to my statement that the Bible is not a handbook, because one may interpret it the wrong way. I believe that the Bible gives certain direct commandments. Abortion is wrong, because a person is killed and the sixth commandment teaches 'You shall not kill.' End of argument. Children must obey their parents

and parents must not provoke their children to anger. Divine, direct commands.

"The federal government has to deal with Indian land claims. The Bible does not give us a direct answer to the problem, but the biblical concepts of fairness and justice have to be explored in coming to an answer.... The Bible requires that we praise God in singing and making music. Lyrics and music are important. This general guideline does not solve all the questions regarding all the (contemporary) types of music.... Biblical principles must be applied to answer the question, and I am sure that one writer may come to a different conclusion than another."

Jacob Kuntz is a retired pastor of the Christian Reformed Church who lives in Brampton where he works part-time in Holland Christian Homes.

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Classified Rates	Birthdays	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries
<p>(Revised February 1, 1995)</p> <p>Births \$25.00</p> <p>Marriages & Engagements \$40.00</p> <p>Anniversaries \$45.00</p> <p>2-column anniversaries . \$90.00</p> <p>Obituaries \$45.00</p> <p>Notes of thanks \$35.00</p> <p>Birthdays \$40.00</p> <p>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge.</p> <p>Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive</p> <p>ATTENTION!</p> <p>a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.</p> <p>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</p> <p>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS</p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p>Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<p>ASSIES:</p> <p>Aduard, Gr. Grimsby, Ont. 1911 December 8 1996</p> <p>With great pleasure and thanksgiving to God we look forward to celebrating the 85th birthday of our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p> <p>SYLVIA ASSIES (nee LEUTSCHER)</p> <p>We thank God for our dear mother and all that she has been and continues to be to us, her children, and pray for continued grace in her life. Her grateful children:</p> <p>John & Alice Bokma Bill & Claire Beldman Garry & Harmene Sytsma</p> <p>Her 18 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Mom's mailing address is: Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5</p>		<p>1956 December 24 1996</p> <p>We have something to celebrate. Our parents</p> <p>ROEL and CORRY SMIT (nee BROUWER)</p> <p>have been married for 40 years. Praise the Lord!</p> <p>Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren, Stuart & Corinne Cameron — Georgetown, Ont.</p> <p>Elizabeth, Megan, Mark Jim & Cynthia Stevens — Georgetown, Ont.</p> <p>Joshua, Jeremy, Coriander Jeff & Karen Veldhoen — Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Kalvin, Krystal, ?</p> <p>We invite you to come to an open house to celebrate on Saturday, Dec. 28, 1996, from 1-3:30 p.m. at Rehoboth-Fellowship Chr. Ref. Church, 800 Burnhamthorpe Rd., Etobicoke, Ont. Please, bring along a memory on paper and we'll put all our memories together in a special</p>	<p>Obituaries</p> <p>Hellendoom Oshawa the Neth. Ont. Aug. 21, 1907 - Nov. 17, 1996</p> <p>REINIER BERENTSCHOT</p> <p>Loved husband of Sina Wilhelmina (deceased 1984). Loved father, opa and great-opa of: Dick & Joan Henk & Anneke Willem & Mary Anneke & Pieter</p> <p>Opa to 10, great-opa to 11. "The Lord is my light and my salvation" (Ps. 27:1a). Correspondence address: D. Berentschot, 500 Farewell Street, Oshawa, ON L1H 6M5</p> <p>the Netherlands - St. Catharines July 1914 - Nov. 1996</p> <p>The Lord has taken home our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p> <p>NEL LANGBROEK (KAT)</p> <p>After many months of suffering she has gone to be with dad, Martin Langbroek (deceased 1992). Loving mother of: Jerry & Alice Gerritsen — Beamsville Alan & Michelle (Jeffrey), April & George (engaged), Nancy & John, Melissa & Jason (friend)</p> <p>Dick & Linda Langbroek — St. Catharines</p> <p>Darrick George & Joanna Langbroek — St. Catharines</p> <p>Diana & Roy (Cameron, Carissa), Martin & Michelle (Alison, Sean) Ann & Clem Bezemer — Grimsby</p> <p>Katharine & Wayne (Douglas, Katelyn), William & Christina (Kyle, Tallia), Clement Jr., Maria Lynn</p> <p>Funeral service was held at Trinity Orthodox Ref. Church, with Rev. J. Bouwers officiating.</p>
<p>Births</p> 	<p>Job Opportunities</p> <p>Full-time employment needed on a well-established poultry/beef/cashcrop operation in Quinte area. Preferred some experience with laying poultry, but willing to train. If interested call Kirby or Arlene Hakkesteege at (613) 475-3532 or fax resume to (613) 475-5128. Position to start January 1, 1997.</p>	<p>Personal</p> <p>Lady in her mid-60s, in the London area, would like to meet gentleman for companionship and travel. I like the outdoors. Financially independent. Please send letters to File #2656, c/o <i>Christian Courier</i>, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p> <p>Single Christian woman with many friends, looking for a gentleman, 38-48 who is interested in a friendship. I like music, reading and long walks. Please call (613) 966-4342.</p>	<p>For rent</p> <p>APARTMENTS: Redeemer College has 2- and 4-bedroom, furnished apartments available. Can be rented daily, weekly or monthly at reasonable rates. No lease required. Please call (905) 648-2131, ext. 260 or 290.</p> <p>For rent: An apartment to share with Shirley. Available January 1997. Close to Fanshawe College, London, Ont. Call (519) 451-6787. If no answer leave your number with (519) 451-8268.</p>	

Classifieds

Obituaries	Obituaries	Obituaries	Job Opportunities		
<p>Hempens, Fr. Grimsby, Ont. Jan. 25, 1909 - Nov. 9, 1996 "The Lord is my Shepherd" (Ps.23). On Nov. 9, 1996, our mom</p> <p>WIETSKE (WILMA) DE VRIES (nee VANDER MEULEN) went home to be with her heavenly Father. We will miss her motherly love and care which she always expressed to her children. Predeceased by her husband William in 1992, a daughter-in-law, a grandson and great-grandson. She will be missed by her children: Wybe & Elly De Vries — Tucson, Ariz. Charles & Stella De Vries — Belleville, Ont. Frances & Mary De Vries — Welland, Ont. John & Klaas De Vries — Belleville, Ont. Owen & Johanna De Vries — Belleville, Ont. Jane & Peter Dykstra — St. Catharines, Ont. Freda & Albert Kiers — Wellandport, Ont. Alice & John Bergman — Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont. Robert & Jeanette De Vries — St. Catharines, Ont. Thirty grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren, one brother Oene VanderMeulen, the Netherlands, as well as many nieces and nephews. Funeral service was held Nov. 12, 1996, at Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines, Ont., Rev. Henry Katerberg officiated. Correspondence address: J. Dykstra, 81 Richelieu Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2M 2C3</p>	<p>Psalm 23 On Nov. 11, 1996, at the age of 61, the Lord took unto Himself our dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle</p> <p>HENDRIK ADOLF HARTEMINK widower of Hanna Brouwer. Gerrit & Rie Hartemink — Whitby Herman & Leida Migchelbrink — Dokkum, the Neth. Dirk & Dina Hartemink — Aylmer Albert & Janny Rougoor — Varsseveld, the Neth. Jack & Dien Hiemstra — Aylmer nieces and nephews.</p> <p>On Oct. 31, 1996, WIEBE (WYBE) VANDERMEULEN of Clearbrook, B.C., suddenly passed away at the age of 84. Wiebe (Wybe) is survived by his loving wife, Margaret, along with nine children and their families: Jack & Dina VanderMeulen Tina VanderHoek George & Coba VanderMeulen Clara & Wayne Waardenburg Piet & Norah VanderMeulen Sam & Kaye VanderMeulen Jeannette & Bill Westerink Dirk & Marlene Derover Tom & Annette Derover 38 grandchildren and 40 great-grandchildren. Wybe is also survived by his sister Folkje Buursma of the Netherlands and his mother-in-law Mrs. Hoekstra. Wybe was predeceased by his first wife Saakje, his granddaughter Shirley Waardenburg, and his son-in-law Bert VanderHoek.</p>	<p><i>Safe in the Arms of Jesus.</i> On Nov. 13, 1996, GEERTJE VAN SLOTEN (nee VAN EGTEREN) went home to be with her Lord, in her 85th year. Beloved wife of Mr. Jan van Sloten. Loving mother of: Evert & Alice van Sloten — Oakville, Ont. Truus & Luke Wolthuis — Edmonton, Alta. Tineke & Jake VanderVelde — Edmonton, Alta. Aart & Janna van Sloten — Edmonton, Alta. Margaret & Bob Vickerson — Wetaskiwin, Alta. Jennie & Frank van Ginhoven — Wassenaar, the Neth. Also lovingly remembered by 27 grandchildren and 26 great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Nov. 18, 1996, in the Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. P. Breedveld officiating. Correspondence address: Mr. J. van Sloten, #228 Emmanuel Home, 13425-57 Street, Edmonton, AB T5A 2G1</p>	<div><div>Seeking a Communications Co-ordinator</div><p>The Lighthouse Ministry is a multicultural diaconal outreach of the Christian Reformed Church in downtown Toronto. It seeks a Communications Co-ordinator to be responsible for encouraging involvement, prayer and financial support for the ministry. Position starts February 3, 1997. The job involves:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Church Relations: develop new initiatives for involvement, co-ordinate written and oral communications.• Fund Raising: special projects, grant proposals.<p>If you feel God may be calling you to this ministry, please send a resume and a 1-2 page writing sample by December 31, 1996, to:</p><p>Adrian Vandenberg, Executive Director The Lighthouse, 1008 Bathurst St., Toronto, ON M5R 3G7 Phone: (416) 535-6262, Fax: (416) 535-3293</p></div> <div><p>Christian Stewardship Services is seeking a SECRETARY to work about 30-40 hours per week at their downtown Toronto office. Responsibilities: secretarial work — typing letters, preparing bulk mailings, answering phones, etc. Requirements: proficient in Word for Windows 95, typing skills (at least 35-40 wpm), office experience an asset. Please send resume to #210-455 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON M5S 2G8, or fax to (416) 977-4611. If you have any questions, feel free to call CSS at (416) 598-2181.</p></div>		
<p>Dec. 23, 1928 - Oct. 15, 1996 "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1). Suddenly, as the result of a car accident on Oct. 15, 1996, our loving husband, father and grandfather</p> <p>MARTIN JOHN VANDEN BERG went to be with his Lord and Savior. Beloved husband of the former Wilma deSchiffart. Loving father of: Catherine & Barry DeJong Jennifer & Andrew Dubbeldam Ralph & Jane Vanden Berg Evelina & Henry Oosterhoef Cynthia & Fred Dullemond Andrea & Rob Vertesi Also missed by 14 grandchildren and by brothers Joop and Adri van den Berg, both of the Netherlands. Predeceased by his parents, Roelof A. van den Berg and the former Jenneke J. van Helden, and by brothers Arie and Roelof van den Berg. Funeral service was held at the Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Brockville, Ont., Rev. H. Kranenburg officiating. Interment at Roselawn Memorial Gardens, Maitland, Ont. Correspondence address: Mrs. W. Vanden Berg, 423 Fernbank Ave., Elizabethtown, ON K6V 7C1</p>	<p>Jan. 7, 1917 - Nov. 13, 1996 "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life.'" (John 14:6). On Nov. 13, 1996, GIJSBERTUS (BERT) VELD passed away peacefully into the arms of his Lord and Savior. He is survived by his loving wife Sylvia and his children: Albert Veld — Calgary Susan (Peter) Bontkes — Edmonton Bill (Sue) Veld — South Carolina Winnie (Harry) Wruck — Vancouver Paul (Karen) Veld — Calgary Peter (Lynn) Veld — Edmonton and grandchildren Roger, Michael (Sherry), Heather (Nathan), Lisa, Andy, Eric, Katie, Patrick, Paul, Adam; and stepgrandchildren Alicia & Shaun (Cormier); great-grandchildren Jesse and Kayley. Also, his special niece, Joanne Vlietstra, as well as special friends Anna (John) Feddes and John (Marge) deJong. He is survived by his sisters Tina Vlietstra, Brampton, Ont., and Lum DeVries, the Neth., and his brother Jaap Veld, the Neth. He will rejoice to see his grandson, Daniel, who predeceased him in 1985. A memorial service celebrating Bert's life was held at Inglewood Chr. Ref. Church, Pastor John Ooms officiating.</p>	<p>Job Opportunities</p> <p>ANCASTER, Ont.: Hamilton District Chr. High School requires a SHOP teacher to begin work Sept. 1, 1997. The successful candidate will possess a strong ability to relate to high school students, hold a vocational certificate, articulate a passion for Christ's love and authority in every facet of reality, and an appreciation for teaching as a developing craft. Applicants are kindly requested to apply in writing to: Hamilton District Chr. High School Mr. Jim Vanderkooy, Principal 92 Glanaster Road Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9 Applications will be received until the position is filled.</p> <p>THUNDER BAY, Ont.: Thunder Bay Chr. School seeks PRINCIPAL to begin Fall 1997. The school has 268 students in SK-9, 9 full-time staff, 6 part-time. Send application and resume to: Search Committee Thunder Bay Chr. School R.R. #2, Arthur St. W. Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1</p>	<div><div>CALVIN College</div><div>FACULTY OPENINGS</div><p>The college is seeking applications for possible openings beginning September 1997 in the following departments:</p><table><tr><td>Art Historian Art/Studio Biology Chemistry and Biochemistry Classics Communication Arts and Sciences Dutch/German Education Engineering English</td><td>French History Nursing (Chair of Calvin/Hope program) Philosophy Physical Education Political Science Religion and Theology Sociology Spanish</td></tr></table><p>Calvin College seeks faculty members who affirm the Christian faith as expressed by the Reformed creeds and have academic and personal qualifications for teaching and scholarship. Applications from North American minorities in any discipline are strongly encouraged. Interested persons or persons who wish to make nominations should correspond with the chairperson of the respective department at:</p><p>Calvin College 3201 Burton Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 USA Calvin College is an equal opportunity employer</p></div>	Art Historian Art/Studio Biology Chemistry and Biochemistry Classics Communication Arts and Sciences Dutch/German Education Engineering English	French History Nursing (Chair of Calvin/Hope program) Philosophy Physical Education Political Science Religion and Theology Sociology Spanish
Art Historian Art/Studio Biology Chemistry and Biochemistry Classics Communication Arts and Sciences Dutch/German Education Engineering English	French History Nursing (Chair of Calvin/Hope program) Philosophy Physical Education Political Science Religion and Theology Sociology Spanish				
		<p>Personal</p> <p>ONE TO ANOTHER</p> <p>Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2</p>			

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Church News

Christian Reformed Church

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New address:

— Rev. John Top, c/o 6334 Lorca Crescent, Mississauga, ON L5N 2J4

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Miscellaneous



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Teachers

VICE-PRINCIPAL NEEDED

Lacombe Christian School, serving a student body of 375 students in grades K-9, requires a Vice-Principal for the 1997-98 school year. Duties include approximately 40 per cent administration time and 60 per cent teaching. Candidates with strengths in elementary education will be given preference. Send your resumes to: John Piers, Principal, Lacombe Christian School, 5206-58 Street, Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9. Phone: (403) 782-6531, Fax: (403) 782-5760. Deadline for applications is December 21, 1996.

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Job Opportunities

SEEKING A PASTOR

Horizon Community Church, a new CRC ministry of 100 families, is seeking a pastor. The church is located in the thriving suburban community of Highlands Ranch, a part of the Denver Metropolitan area. Key to the church's program is Bible-based dynamic preaching, enthusiastic worship, and sharing of the gospel in active outreach to a suburban community. Essential to the church's development is continued facilitation of the merging of two congregations and leadership for staff ministry. Please send inquiries and/or resumes to the Search Committee, Horizon Community Church, 7140 S. Colorado Blvd., Littleton, CO 80122.

Miscellaneous

Student Financial Aid

Any student from Classis Chatham (Chr. Ref. Church) who has applied to Calvin Seminary or its S.P.M.C. Program for the purpose of full-time ministry in the CRC and who is in need of financial assistance for the coming academic year is asked to request application forms from the Secretary, Mrs. Suzanna Westerhof, 9772 Gold Creek Drive, R.R. #4, Komoka, ON N0L 1R0. The completed application form must be in the hands of the Secretary no later than February 14, 1997, or the application will not be processed. Also, first-time applicants should reserve the evening of March 3, 1997, for an interview with the Student Fund Committee.

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*Circulation Manager
Christian Courier.*

Events

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

- Nov. 30 Shalom Manor's "Annual Tea & Craft Sale," from 1-4 p.m., at Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont. Flowers, crafts, gifts and the ever popular bake table. Donations are welcome. Keep this date open!
- Nov. 30 A one-day seminar for Christians teaching modern languages led by David Smith. Hosted by ICS, Toronto, Ont. Theme "What does it mean to be a Christian teacher of modern languages?" Teachers \$35/Students \$25. Info.: Connie Kuipers (416) 979-2331.
- Nov. 30-Dec. 19 Concert by the "Mattaniah Male & Boys Choir" with Andre Knevel at the organ. All events at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 30: (new) St. Paul's Church (Dundas & Wellington), Woodstock, Ont.; Dec. 6: Knox Presb. Church (Church St.), St. Catharines, Ont.; Dec. 19: Dundas FRC (Weirs Lane), Dundas, Ont. Admission by donation at the door.
- Dec. 1 The Mississauga Choral Society, orchestra and soloists perform G.F. Handel's "Messiah," 3 p.m., St. Dominic's Church, Cawthra & Atwater, Mississauga, Ont. Info./tickets: (905) 278-7059.
- Dec. 4 Chr. Farmers Federation of Ontario 1996 annual convention & banquet, Holiday Inn (next to Stone Rd. Mall), Guelph, Ont. Convention at 10 a.m. Banquet at 5:30 p.m. Registration deadline: Nov. 29, 1996. For info./tickets contact: (519) 837-1620 or fax (519) 824-1835.
- Dec. 4 Christmas concert by the Redeemer College Concert Choir and the Campus Chorus, all directed by Dr. Christiaan Teeuwssen. Anthems, carols and madrigals. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (905) 648-2131.
- Dec. 11 The "London Art Gallery Noon-Hour Concert Series," featuring Carolyn Stronks-Zeyl (flute), and Mark Payne (piano). At 12 noon, Art Gallery Auditorium, London, Ont. Free admission.
- Dec. 14 G.F. Handel's "Messiah," will be performed by the Niagara Symphony Chorus, orchestra and soloists, 8 p.m., Calvary Church, 89 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. (The concert will be repeated Dec. 15 at 3 p.m.). Info./tickets: (905) 687-4993.
- Dec. 14-21 Christmas concerts by the Ontario Chr. Music Assembly (Leendert Kooij, director) with Andre Knevel at the organ, Dec. 14: 8 p.m., Melrose United Church, 86 Homewood Ave., Hamilton, Ont.; Dec. 18: 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, Bowmanville, Ont.; Dec. 21: 8 p.m., Willowdale United Church, Willowdale, Ont. For info./tickets call (416) 636-9779.
- Dec. 14-15 Handel's "Messiah" presentations by the "Laudate Dominum Choir" and the "Chatham Christian High School Concert Choir" (Barbara Mavin, director). Dec. 14: 8 p.m., Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont. Guest organist: Jan Overduin. Tickets at the door (\$10/\$8 seniors/students). Proceeds for RC; Dec. 15: St. Paul's Congregational Church, 450 Park Ave., Chatham, Ont. With organ and orchestra. Free will offering. Proceeds: Salvation Army. Info.: (519) 352-6081.
- Dec. 15 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Peter Van Egmond, 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont.
- Dec. 16 Christmas concert and carol-sing-song with the 100-voice "Hosanna Mixed Choir" and the "Bell" choir of Calvin Chr. School. At 7:45 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont. Freewill offering.
- Dec. 22 "A Festival of nine Lessons and Carols," featuring the Mississauga Choral Society (Chrys A. Bentley, director), at 4:30 p.m., St. Dominic's Church, Cawthra & Atwater, Mississauga, Ont. Free-will offering. Info.: (905) 278-7059.
- Jan. 3-4 New Year's concerts by organists Andre Knevel and Willem van Suydam. Audience participation! Both events at 8 p.m. Jan. 3: Chalmers United Church, Woodstock, Ont.; Jan. 4: Central Presb. Church, Hamilton, Ont.

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News

CPJ expounds that justice is every step

Jeff Hoogendoorn

VICTORIA, B.C. — The Victoria chapter of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) recently assembled to hear CPJ staffers Harry Kits and Bruce Voogd present the theme "Justice is Every Step."

"Justice is Every Step" exposes the social and financial dilemmas facing the poor, as well as those to whom injustice is doled out. These two groups often involve the same people and CPJ is aware that such people and groups require advocates. Kits, CPJ executive director, and Voogd, newcomer and financial development/member-ship recruitment co-ordinator, utilized a quiver of statistics and vignettes to lend realism and credibility to their presentation.

CPJ believes that exposing inequalities is the beginning of steps toward justice. Kits points to the disparity between the rich and the poor. He cites figures which include the pay of CEOs of North American corporations

whose 1982 earnings averaged 42 times that of their average worker. In 1990 that figure increased to 85 times and in 1992 it was raised to an average of 157 times (not including stock options). By comparison, CEOs of Japanese corporations generally earn less than 23 times that of their laborers.

Using 1991 figures, Kits furthermore points out that the richest 20 per cent of the population amassed 48.9 per cent of total income, while the poorest 20 per cent possessed only .9 per cent of total income.

What this means for the unfortunate bottom 20 per cent of the population is abject poverty, says Kits. He points out that more than 130 new food banks have opened since 1990, bringing the total to more than 2000.

CPJ is not an organization bent on compiling data, offering only cerebral answers to real world crises. Rather, Kits says CPJ attempts to offer tangible solutions to issues which plague

our modern world. One example is offering higher child tax credits, which will help poor parents and their children.

Up-front with compassion

Drawing openly on its Christian tenets of love of our neighbors CPJ petitions various government departments to promote justice to all people through the implementation of fair and sound public policies. Kits says, "We're very up-front in our commitment with respect to compassion, stewardship and justice for all."

However, both Kits and Voogd propose that not every "step of justice" is necessarily taken by CPJ staffers. They suggest such steps can be taken by anyone interested in the cause of social justice. Kits says that "justice is every step and in every step.... Every just step is an offering to God. This is our clarion call."

CPJ's future steps toward jus-

tice include more public education and public affairs involvement, and expanding their knowledge base, and contacts with whom CPJ has need of from various disciplines. The most recent addition is a home page on the World Wide Web which will include statistics, articles from their publication *The Catalyst*, and CPJ briefs.

Steps toward justice are both big and small. CPJ believes, that these steps are accomplished first by educating ourselves about public policies, then modeling justice in our own lives and by acting locally. CPJ suggests letter writing campaigns to MPs or local newspapers to bring social injustice to the forefront.

Kits remarks that changing others' thinking or opinions concerning issues is not always immediately apparent, but that in the small steps "we may become like yeast in a loaf which will bring about change."

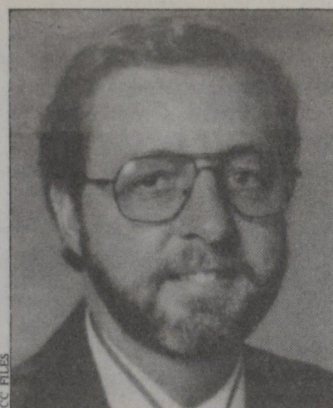
Supreme Court ruling seen as cloud with silver lining

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — The Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) and the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) are disappointed that the Supreme Court did not rule in their favor in the Elgersma-Adler case.

The two organizations had appealed to the highest court in the land regarding funding and health care for students attending independent religious-based schools. Both OACS and CJC had argued that the Charter protects them against discrimination.

Five of the nine judges said the Charter does not reach into the area of education. Two said it does, but that the appellants had not proved their case. The remaining two said that the Charter *does* reach into education and that the appellants had proved their case.



John Vanasselt

What the decision amounts to, says OACS director of communications John Vanasselt, is not that they were wrong in asking for funding, but that "we used the wrong vehicle to get there."

Vanasselt thinks that there is some inconsistency in the way in which Charter appeals are ruled on. He can think of other rulings in which education rights have been upheld on the basis of the Charter.

Decision creates political room

But there is a silver lining to the court's decision, according to Vanasselt. Ontario Education Minister John Snobelen "is now free to create any kind of school system he wants to because the Charter cannot be used against him."

One of the arguments used by the Canadian Jewish Congress (not by the Ontario Alliance) was that to fund Roman Catholic schools and not other religious schools was discrimination. But the court ruled that the Charter cannot be used to attack the Constitution.

Vanasselt believes that the OACS and the CJC now have to keep moving on the political agenda. Some encouraging sounds have been coming from the Ontario government regarding the possibility that the education grant follow the student.

Harry Fernhout of Brampton, Ont., one of the five parents

cited in the appeal, says, "It's very important that people in the Christian school community not lose heart. We have to keep up the struggle."

Brazilians dying over land disputes

BRASILIA, Brazil (EP) — More Brazilians have died this year in disputes over land than died in all of the previous year, according to the Catholic Church's Pastoral Land Commission. The group said 45 landless workers and union activists were killed in the first eight months of 1996, up from 41 in 1995.

The increase is attributed to an April clash in which 19 peasants died after demanding land. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso responded to critics demanding land reform in his weekly radio broadcast, saying 35,000 families have been given land so far this year and the target of 60,000 settled families in 1996 would be met.

News Digest

Mother Teresa an honorary American

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — U.S. President Clinton signed a bill in October bestowing honorary U.S. citizenship on Mother Teresa, the 86-year-old Nobel Peace Prize-winning nun who has devoted her life to working among the world's poorest people. "She has brought hope and love into the lives of millions of orphaned and abandoned children the world over," Clinton said in a statement. "She has nursed the sick, cared for the poor and shown us through concrete actions how we can make real our dreams for a just and good society."

Graham finishes memoirs

MONTREAL, N.C. (EP) — Evangelist Billy Graham says he's finished writing his memoirs after five or six years of writing. "It's all in a package ready to go to the publisher. And they'll look at it and send it back and then we'll spend another two or three months on it," he said. The working title for the book comes from the hymn sung at the end of each Graham Crusade: *Just As I Am*.

Canada compares well with U.S. in business costs, study says

NEW YORK (Dept. of Foreign Affairs) — Art Eggleton, Minister for International Trade, released in New York City the findings of an independent study of 23 Canadian and American cities which shows that business operating costs, particularly total labor costs, are significantly lower in Canada than in the U.S. "This study by the Canadian consulting firm KPMG shows that cities right across Canada are excellent sites for investment by U.S. firms," said Eggleton.

KPMG found that after-tax costs average 6.7 per cent less in Canadian than in U.S. cities.

All of the most location-specific costs were taken into account, including land and building costs.

Thinkbit

"Somebody is drowning 100 yards off shore. A Republican throws out 50 yards of rope and says, 'We've done our part, you have to do yours.' A Democrat throws out 200 yards of rope and drops his end."

Tony Campolo